THE BIG TAKEOVER

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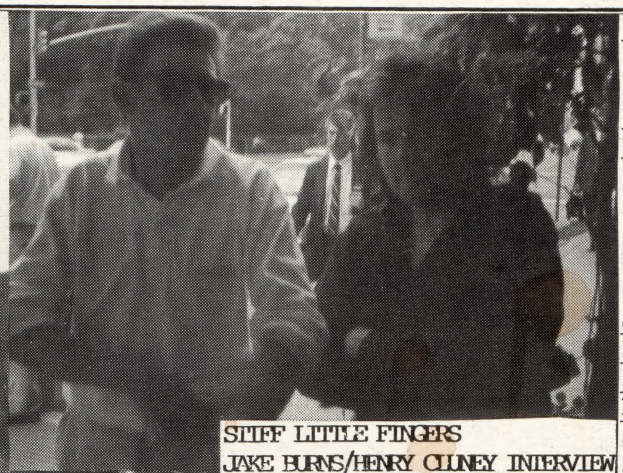

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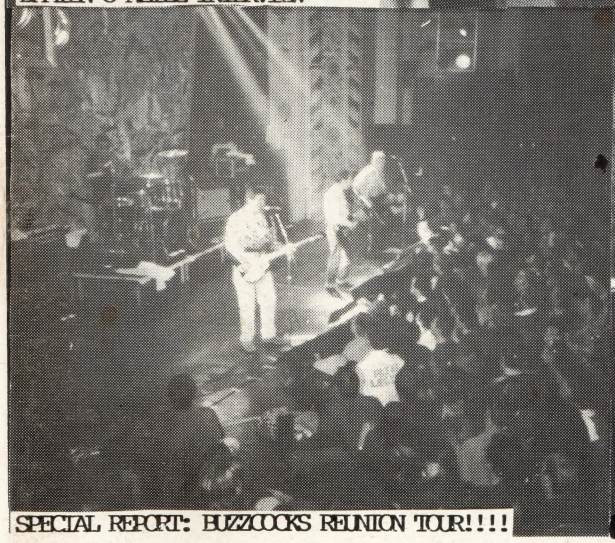

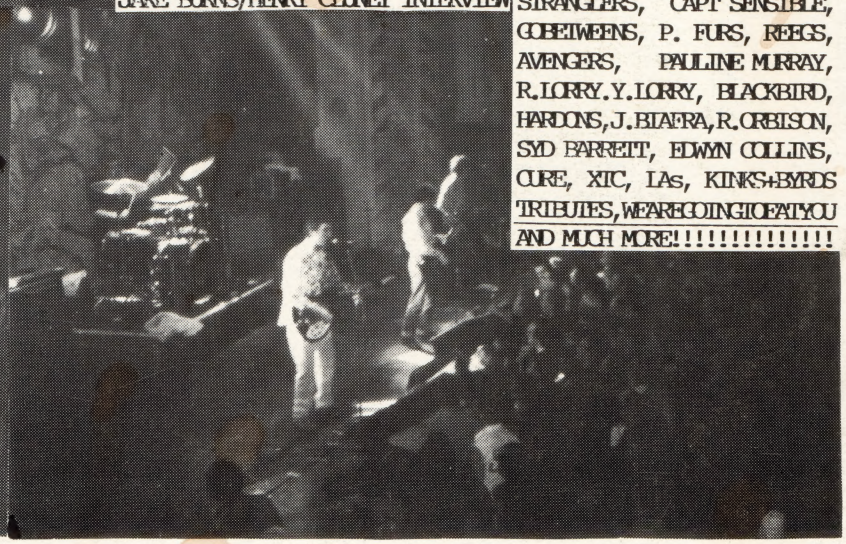

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COVER CREDITS:

ARTWORK (TOP 1/3 OF PAGE) BY **SUMISHTA BRAHM** (15th of last 16 issues!)

PHOTOS OF DAMIEN O'NEILL, JAKE BURNS & HENRY CLUNEY, AND BUZZCOCKS AT METRO, CHICAGO (11/18/89) BY **JACK RABID**

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(C)1989 Rhodent Productions (not secretly owned by Jim Bakker, honest!). Why not reprint some sections of this mag, no charge, make us happy. Just ask first, or incur considerable wrath (we'll hold our breath 'til we turn blue, so there). Big Takeover is a bi-annual publication, which comes rolling off the presses every June and December (unless of course, I come to my senses some day, and find a real job that actually makes money), and was founded in May of 1980 by Jack Rabid, and a curious specimen known to biologists as "Dave Stein." It's true that this "Stein" creature has caused much bewilderment upon the puzzled countenances of zooligists and more normal Big Takeover readers. The reason for this befuddlement among the taxidermists and others whose vital concern is nomenclature, is that this "Stein" wilderbeast hasn't made an appearance in these pages since the very first issue, even though the whole magazine was his idea. As soon as he had hoodwinked Rabid into going along with his goofy enterprise, he whisked away in his spaceship to another planet (identified by beleagured astronomists as "Boston") to attend his intergalactic school of scam (more commonly known as Boston University), where he boasted to his schoolmate aliens with the annoying accent (we'll call them "Bostonians who talk like Ted Kennedy") about the classic con job he'd pulled on that unassuming, trusting, faithful little puppy Rabid. "Just think," he drunkenly drolled to his new admiring (inebriated) pals, "We only published a one sided, one page, 100 copies first issue and I skeddattled. I bet in a decade or so he'll be up to his ears in work, with tons of articles, glossy covers, worldwide subscriptions, and a ledger constantly in the red." With that they laughed so hard, they knocked over all their beers (classes?

What classes?), and got thrown out of The Rat by bouncers big enough to be "phylum brutus" and dumb enough to pass for "brain deadeus." Sure enough, it's almost 10 years later, Stein is still nowhere in sight (though he's changed planets; he's now in Phoenix), laughing at the mess he created, while issue 27 assembles itself without him as ever. The good news is, that Grinch Stein, this unthinkable being more mysterious than Jimmy Hoffa's burial site (Football anyone?), may have unleashed his own unintended monster, as no one has been able to shut up that garrulous, verbose, obnoxious and opinionated dope Rabid ever since. For the 27th time, this magazine exists solely for the purpose of identifying and supporting alternatives to our decrepid culture, where brains and heart count for nothing, and moronic behavior and bozo blockheads are forever celebrated, where the imaginative and daring are ever endangered species, and where vibrant, challenging, contemplative, and fresh art and expression are relegated to that societal wastebasket "minority taste," as insignificant and inconsequential to Susan And John B. Normal and their mutant heavy metal offspring as a solitary blade of grass in a field of weeds. But the alternatives are not merely for the brave or for those left out at sorority picnics, they exist, they flourish seemingly on inspiration alone (surely not for the love of power, fame and money that motivates most so-called artists and media mavens). While your classmates, coworkers, relatives and fellow commuters are getting off on Bon Jovi, Debbie Gibson, Tom Cruise, Michael J. Fox, Donahue, General Hospital, and Home Shopping Network, we can still content ourselves to know that there is something else for those of us who are disgruntled with all that vapid bullshit and boneless chatter. This mag is dedicated to the pursuit of better music and better culture; of more meaningful conversations and more human conduct; of spirit rather than image, of support and building up rather than cheap putdowns, of doing something instead of just sitting 'round and complaining. Those who do shuck the harsh and blaring dictums of the marketplace in order to give us art more meaningful than this season's fad/trend/flavor-of-the-month, art that lasts for the life of its patron rather than its life on the shelf, deserve and need our attention and our appreciation, and who better than us to give it to them? Who benefits more than us? Spend your money and your time wisely people, you don't get a second chance to do it better next time.

STAFF: J A C K R A B I D: Publisher/Editor/Typist/ all writing and photos except where credited, accountant, all layout, mail answerer (is it too late to just move away and not tell anyone?), fact checker (we rewrite history), former Yankee fan (Clark and Henderson for a child molester, an AAA starter and four mediocre relievers? Who's making these trades, Zsa Zsa Gabor?), swinging New Orleans bound Giants fan (Joe Picsarcik? who?), charlatan scholar (Descartes discovered the airplane, right?), still fearless traveler (Buzzcocks in Detroit? I'm there!), hotel manager (Jon? Are you under there Jon?) and impassioned keeper of the flame (any flame, it doesn't matter). Your host, welcome.
C A R O L I N E P A R I: spelling checker (for the 100th time, Jack, it's separate, not "seperate"), proofreader (you must be on acid or something...), Mark Burgess interview transcriber (is this some kind of ABC miniseries, or what?! I want a raise or I quit!), tireless educator (those kids in my class think they're such wise guys...yawn), feeder of the unemployed (you'll get your tab when you get a job), a person who always puts the sunny side into life...just don't try to call her after 10PM, some of us go to bed at a decent hour!
R I C H K A T Z: Additional proofreading (It's late, who wants to read your boring reviews anyway? Get a dictionary!), someone who actually watches the Jets on Sundays (and who declines my advice to wear a bag over his head, even at home. Hey man, Joe must go!), world famous media critic (I hate this job!), and future Californian? (earthquake? What earthquake? Open up that golden gate!)
G R E G S A H A G I A N: SLF interview transcriber (finally, bands normal people have records of!), occasional review contributer (Did I go to any shows you didn't?), super-fan ("I got Mega-City 4 on CD! Beat that, chump!"), Columbia chemist (can recite the periodic table blindfolded, hung from the ceiling, while being forcefed saltine crackers - yes, we actually tried it), the man most likely to perfect cold fusion in his own bubblebath.
S U M I S H T A B R A H M: Cover Big Takeover graphic (her 15th in the last 16 issues, all different!), able to convert sorrow to joy in a single bound (and hopefully, in a single move), appreciater of the talented, shelterer of the lost (physically or spiritually), and a woman whose magic potions (usually plain old English tea, but there's is something special I'd swear) are as potent as her charm herself (that'll be $10 for that windup!)
J O N W E L L S Transcription of Damien O'Neill interview, and much proofreading. Cornering the market on Diet Coke, latest interior decorator, and the most likely to kick in a TV set if the Giants lose a game again like last year's 49er game.

THANKS MOST OF ALL TO Caroline Pari, Greg Sahagian, and Jon Wells for their long hours transcribing the Mark Burgess, SLF and Damien O'Neill interviews for me, my good friends, **AND SECONDLY** to Sumishta Brahm, Rich Katz, Mitch and Sandy Friedland, Larry Heinemann, Mike McMackin, Jody Kurilla, Jeff &Joyce Kelson, Ben Voss and Naked Statue, Steve Lombardo, James Graham, Ira Robbins, Tim Sommer, Dave Stein, Ken Salerno, Dave Burokas and family, Kevin Linehan, Mike Shea and Joe Banks, Eddie Marshall, Andrea Mulrain, Sue Tanner, John Fox, John Kezdy, Tim Hinely, Herb Jue, Steve Fallon, Bob Mould, Steve Hendricks, Alan Fielding, Jim Fouratt, Frank Blank, Michael Ackerman, Louise (CBGB), Bruce Lichter, Jeff Runnings, Mike Scappino, Buzzcocks (!) and of course, Paul O'Reily who hates brown sweaters, Judy Holmes and Ron, Elyse Press, Jeff & Meg Wright, Tony Schinella, Adrian Borland & family, Steve Fellows, Steve Drewett, Lorna Muller, Ian MaCulloch, Chris Bjorkland, Dave Ruffy, Mark (Monkey Run), Andy Clegg, Eric Moffat, Chris Bailey, all Corradi, Griswold, Resca, Digradi, Allen and other family I was glad to see at my nephew's christening. **SPECIAL THANKS** to Mark Burgess, Damien O'Neill, Jake Burns, Henry Cluney, Ed Kuepper, Jeff Pezzati, John Haggerty, Piere Kezdy, Eric Spicer and Karen Bemis for the interviews, **AND THANKS** to Todd Abramson, Andy (So What), Michael Azerrad, Tim A. (The late Offense, R.I.P.), Attilla The Stockbroker, Bruce Babst, Jeff Borchardt, Blases, Anna and Sid Bensen, Tim Broun, David Best, John Bomb, Gaye Black, Kristi Callan, Mike Conley, Sal Canzonieri, Luke Cauldwell, Charlie Charas, Robert Chirieleison, Ben Corrigan, Phillip Diggle, Dorian Dawson, Deep Six, Alan Duffy, Greg Fasolino, Dave Fielding, John Figler, Dave Frey, Flower, Mike Faccioli, Flipside Mag., For Against, Jeff Gibson, Ted G. (See Hear), Steve Graham, Matt Green, Mel Goldman, Barbara Gogan, Lou Guarino (Central Park's my racket, get outta

town, see?), Kevin Hogan, Katy Hecker, Jeff Herrmann and Kathy, Pam Hawks, Kathy James, Tom & Dave Keener, Lara Khachooni, Amanda Kramer, Debbie Kerrigan, Chris Krakora, Doug Katz, Ed Lin, Jeff Loh, Lil' Rhino Gazette, The Last, Ron Ledonne, Lord John, Cindy L. (The Ledge), Joan McNulty, Nick Marden, Mary Melia, Leticia Mulzac, Mega City 4, Stu Novick, Paul Navarez, New Model Army + Ratso, Matt Pinfield, Tom Paine, Maria Pari, Lisa Robinson and Deane Zimmerman, all at Rockpool, John Russell, Steve Rea, Lee Ann Rader, Mike Saunders, Dave Segal (You Can't Hide Your Love Forever mag, John Silva, Mike Sikkas, T.V. Smith + Gaye, Spiral Jetty, Jim Slade, David Snyder, Lydia Szkodzinsky, Brian & Shaun Sheridan, Social Distortion, Barry S. (Venus), John Stewart, Jim Testa, Michael Tedesco, Ron Velloci, Vanguard Printers, Cathy Wojcik, Bruce Warren, Julie Wolfe, Janet Whitehouse, Greg Wilson, Christine Young, Monica Zakkay. **THIS ISSUE IS FOR GREG DUNLAP, WHO KNOWS GOOD MUSIC WHEN HE HEARS IT, FOR DR. PERRONE, WHO DOESN'T KNOW ME, BUT IS AMONG THE ONLY SAINTS AMONG MEN I'VE EVER SEEN, FOR RICHARD LYSONS, A TRUE MUSIC ENTHUSIAST WHOSE ATTITUDE IS MUCH BETTER THAN MINE, AND REGINA JOSKOW, WHO IS KINDER TO ME THAN MY OWN MOM (SORRY MOM, ALRIGHT, AS KIND). IF I DIDN'T HAVE THE DUMB LUCK IN THIS WORLD OF MEETING PEOPLE LIKE THESE ALL THE TIME, MY LIFE WOULD BE DULL, COMMONPLACE, AND CONTEMPTIBLE. THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE BUZZCOCKS, WHO GAVE US THE THRILL OF THE DECADE BY NOT ONLY COMING BACK, BUT BEING BETTER THAN WE COULD EVER HAVE HOPED.**

THIS ISSUE WAS LAID OUT OVER 11 LONG DAYS DECEMBER 1-11, 1989 BY JACK RABID

OPENING STATEMENT 1; MTV POST MODERN AND 120 MINUTES: Big Takeover would be remiss if we didn't thank MTV Post Modern host **TIM SOMMER** for featuring our magazine on his show in September, and again on October after several letters asked him to give out the address again. Those of you who are reading the mag for the first time as a result of Tim's feature, we hope you enjoy it.

The fascinating thing, though, has been the mail from those who responded. Those of us who live in urban centers with music scenes, live gigs, and alternative record stores don't necessarily take for granted our access and natural awareness of this sort of music. But neither do we appreciate it fully either, something that would become more recognizable to us if we ever moved to a more remote address where such access was more difficult or was cut off completely. The overwhelming theme of these letters was that the people writing live in the middle of nowhere, or a city that has few shows. Further, knowledge is a premium, particularly among younger fans; without live music or fanzines or record stores, the only place to learn about more challenging music than the top 40 and Rolling Stone and Spin's glamourous world of AOR dinosaur rock, is, oddly enough, MTV, specifically 120 Minutes and Post Modern. Yes, these programs barely scratch the surface of what's out there, and aren't known for taking chances. Much of what they consider "Alternative" is pretty damn mainstream; Depeche Mode for one. Moreover, the prohibitive cost of video shuts out all the shoestring independent labels. But, what's odd to those of us who take our knowledge and involvement in better music culture as our natural happenstance, is that were it not for these programs, the vast wasteland that we

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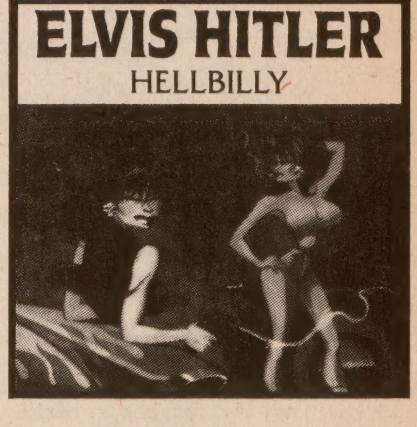

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call non-urban Middle America would never even have heard about Echo and The Bunnymen, Stone Roses, Pixies, Throwing Muses, Morrissey/Smiths, and the gamut of the non-charting cream of the college radio sound, even bands we here at Big-T don't like, like Red Hot Chili Peppers. Basically, 4 hours a week of even major label dominated "new music" on 2 MTV specialty shows is all that most folks ever get of what we purchase and see regularly. From there they buy the records at innocuous chains, the Sam Goodies or Licorice Pizzas of the world. It may not be much, but for the first time in 20 years, challenging music that is better than the awful Casey Kasem pop, disco and hard rock strangulation is being regularly exposed to masses of people outside of the hip areas.

Such exposure, and the complete success of REM, Cure, XTC, etc. has opened up the marketplace to the extent that such music is actually a marketplace viability, even though it isn't disposable, lifeless, made to order trash, and pretty boy metal like we'll always have and always hate. Yes, the major labels have all created "alternative departments" and are signing every indie band with more than 1 or 2 records on the marketplace, bands who even a year or two ago would have been laughed out of any AOR office. The signing of bands like Prong, Lemonheads, Social Distortion etc. to major label deals would have sounded preposterous a few years ago; it may sound equally unlikely a few years down the road if these bands don't sell and dropping season begins at these labels, which is entirely likely. But, a larger cross section of interested young people are discovering vibrant music for the first time since, oh, the late 60's, and that makes for culture that lasts, our own modern culture to celebrate in 25th anniversary reunions in 25 years instead of being forcefed the sons of Led Zep the rest of our lives.

This is a good development anyway you look at it.

Lastly, we congratulate Sommer on being the first MTV V-Jay in memory to write his own parts (now if only they'd let him pick the videos!), it's nice to hear the Chili Peppers being called for their inexcusable sexist attitudes, or even something more positive, like his talking about The Saints' influence on Aussie rock before showing a Midnight Oil video. This has been more fun and informative viewing than MTV has ever allowed. How he gets away with it is a mystery from the station where everything is always happy, an endless, stupid party. But we like it, we like it.

Postmodern is on M-Th 12:30-1 at night. 120 Minutes is on Sundays from midnight to 2. It's not exactly a good substitute for decent college radio or adventurous commercial radio, a fanzine that knows what's what, or even a good friend with informed taste, and a decent music collection to tape or borrow. But, in those places where those things are unavailable, i.e. 95% of this country, they're all that people have, and they're far better than nothing.

OPENING STATEMENT 2: A lot of you seemed to like last issue's opening statement on work (it was even singled out in some of the reviews of the mag in other publications!), and I appreciate that, I put a lot of myself into it, and feared that I was merely airing my gripes, rather than expounding in a way that would be of true general insight. Work=slavery is something we're all aware of but few challenge, or as was my case, our greed, misjudgement, fear, desperation, insecurity or lack of awareness keeps us from landing employment that even comes close to suiting our talents, interests and temperments.

As it happens, many of you who wrote also asked if I'd found another job yet, since I'd mentioned last time that I was about to quit my corporate job of four years as supervisor in July. Yes I have, I now work part time for a little college program, 24 hours a week, M-Th 1-7PM, and I am so much happier I feel twice as stupid for having put myself through such '85-'89 torture for nothing. I am as well paid, the benefits are as good, I don't have to drag myself out of bed on 4 hours sleep and three cups of coffee after concerts and Springhouse gigs, and best of all, I work for one person who is very nice in a relaxed atmosphere, I no longer wear a suit, and my work is more meaningful, helping students grapple with afterhours, afterjob education. I am free at last, and hopefully this mag will improve for the extra time and energy I now have. Those of you wrote, thank you for your inquiries.

OPENING STATEMENT 3: If you like what you read in this magazine, here's some other places you'll encounter the editor's work:

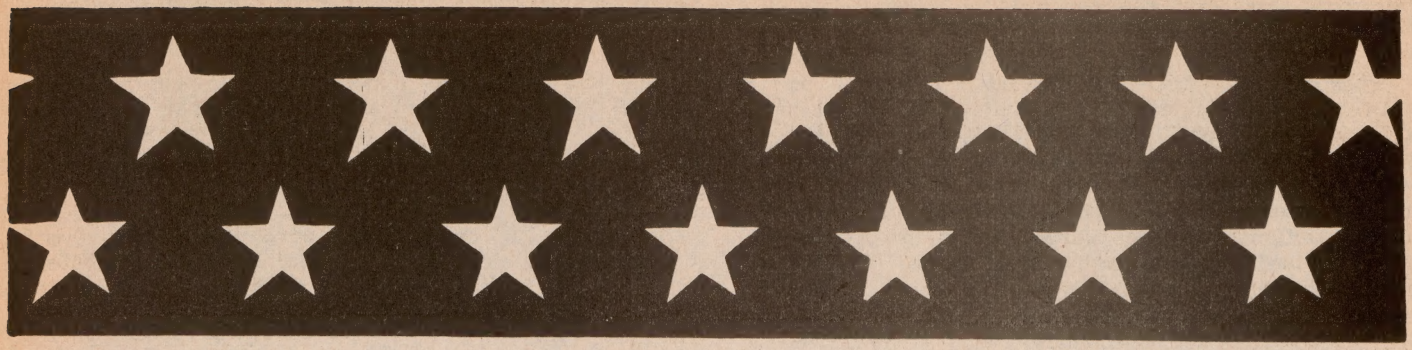
1) **Alternative Press Magazine** (a monthly magazine, I write a large news/info column for them each month. A much better mag than Spin for articles, interviews and up to date info. (1451 W. 112th, Cleveland OH, 44102)

2) **Rockpool Magazine** (a twice a month industry tipsheet/trade publication, lists all releases and charts College Radio/Retail/Club DJ playlists, like Billboard for "Alternative" Music. Mostly for those who put out, spin, sell or otherwise market the music. I've done a talent scout "Up and coming, overlooked and/or underappreciated" column for them every two weeks for 5 years: (83 Leonard St., 2nd Floor, NY, NY 10013)

3) **Music View** (a weekly syndicated radio show for college and adventurous commercial radio stations, made up of interviews, music, flashback, and brief commentary) It's heard on over 200 stations across the country, a half hour each week. I play one song a week, generally an old rarity of some current interest, or some new overlooked release that's really great and deserves more attention, I enjoy the opportunity immensely each week, for four years now. (Joseph Fox Communications, 67-73 Spring St., NY, NY 10012)

4) **Springhouse** In which I try to put up or shut up. It's easy to criticize from a distance what you yourself can't do. We believe that those who like this mag would like our music too, we certainly attempt to hold it to the same standard that we judge the bands contained herein, though of course, that's for you to judge and for me to hope we succeed at. We sure like it, two years worth now. I'm drums, Mitch Friedland guitar and most of the vocals, Larry Heinemann is bass. (same address as the mag)

5) **Autonomy Records** My currently inactive record label that in 7 years has only managed to release two fair to OK (but hopefully charming!) singles by my old 1980-1984 NYC punk band Even Worse. Hope to get it off the ground, it sure is tough, the indie scene today is some kind of madman's joke. Remember **PETE BUCK** once said the first **REM** single was distributed by blind men? He meant his own staff; what with so many indie distributors who've folded over the years, blowing away indie labels in the process, Buck can only count himself as being fortunate he signed to IRS rather than keeping up his own label! But someday, hopefully! There are records I expect to release (same address as mag)



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EDITORIALS

EDITORIAL #1 PUNK REUNIONS: 1989 has definitely been a great year for the reunions of punk groups. Both **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** and **THE DAMNED** reunited briefly in 1988 (and SLF originally in '87), but both brought their acts to the US this year, as seen in our review section. Most spectacularly of all, is of course **THE BUZZCOCKS**, one of the greatest and most sorely missed bands of all time, who will have completed their US reunion tour by the time you read this, an absolute dream come true for this writer. There were lesser publicized reunions as well. San Francisco's **CRIME**, another '76-'79 favorite, came back (they claimed coincidently in their interview in Maximum Rock 'n' Roll) on the heels of new found popularity, the result of **SONIC YOUTH**'s cover of their first single "Hot Wire My Heart." As you'll see in the album reviews, South L.A. beachpunks **THE CROWD** reappeared after an 8 year absence and released a new LP, and further North in Hollywood, one of the 10 greatest US punk groups of all time (and top 4 of the late 70's) **THE WEIRDOS** have surprisingly continued their sporadic reunion shows (see review by Kevin Hogan), and the inside word is they're looking for a deal for their new material. Even London's incompetents, **THE LURKERS** have reunited for a 2nd time, and the support band for Buzzcocks in Cleveland was **THE PAGANS**! (see LP reviews). There's also news of a new version of **GANG OF FOUR** coming together, that will sadly bear little resemblance to the old lineup, though who knows, anything is possible!

In various times of the year one can see other groups that reunited earlier than '88 (like **WIRE, PERE UBU, TOM ROBINSON BAND, VIBRATORS, MEKONS** or what passes for **SHAM 69** these days) or other late 70's punk/postpunk outfits (we'll even include new wavers this time) who still survive in one form or another (**SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, STRANGLERS, 999, LAST, DOA, BAD BRAINS, KILLING JOKE, SAINTS, XTC, REDUCERS, CURE, DICKIES, UK SUBS, NEIGHBORHOODS, NEW ORDER, GO-BETWEENS, U2, COMSAT ANGELS, RAMONES, LOS CRUZADOS, PUBLIC IMAGE LTD., FLAMING GROOVIES, B52's, TALKING HEADS, FALL and ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN** (if they do indeed decide to keep going without Ian MaCulloch and the late Pete Defreitas). Add in the myriad number of solo artists who've been going since then (**JOHN COOPER CLARKE ELVIS COSTELLO, LENE LOVICH, LOU REED, IGGY POP, JONATHAN RICHMAN, JOE JACKSON**, etc.), or the dozens of solo acts and bands who date from the late 70's era (everyone from **JOE STRUMMER** and **BIG AUDIO DYNAMITE** to **HECTOR** or **BLACKBIRD**), or the still ever-flowing posthumous retrospectives that keep coming at us (unreleased Peel Sessions to anthologies like the recent **SWELL MAPS** one), and it's clear that punk/post-punk nostalgia is a 12 months, 365 days a year business!

In a past editorial on the bogus "10th anniversary of punk," we noted the dangers of such rampant dredging up of the past, not-the-least-of which is the seemingly incurable tendency to misrepresent history as if to say everything was so peachy keen then, when in fact the music was a most hated commodity by all but the black sheep of society. Worst of this is the lost facts that most critics refused to write about this music much back then, as a threat to their Fleetwood Mac coverage, the same writers who today endlessly praise the punk movement for it's greatness: In the decade end issue of Rolling Stone, for example, the writers lamented that unlike the 70's, 60's and 50's there was no revolution in music in the 80's, tacitly implying that the 70's revolution was the punk explosion. Must we remind these folks yet again that unlike Chuck Berry and The Beatles, punk never made the charts here (Unless you think 5th album '83 Clash was still punk rock!), it had no support from commercial radio, major labels, or the established industry in general LEAST OF ALL Rolling Stone, who after one poor-selling issue with **SEX PISTOLS** on the cover abandoned almost all punk coverage, save for an occasional article or two and a **TOM CARSON** review here or there. Case in point: the only Buzzcocks piece wasn't until they were 4 years into their career, and even then they had to split the piece with **MAGAZINE**! Most significantly, one of the most dangerous problems of this nostalgia is that it hurts bands trying to get under way today, trying to get things going in this dead era, trying to build on this now well-recognized past to create something memorable now. Yes we've been through this before.

On the other hand, little can get one angrier than when people take the attitude that ALL NOSTALGIA IS BAD(!!!), particularly as it relates to these reunion tours. In the SLF interview later in this issue, we asked their opinions of this issue, and we agree with their response. Why shouldn't a band be welcomed back into the fold, if they decide to return? Why should we put them down saying "they're only doing it for the money," when that is most assuredly an OK motivation if the "quality" of the product is up to snuff? So what, they make money, and they can make a damn sight more now than they could when they were around. Is this any business of ours? Is it surprising that people who delightfully discover that their popularity has increased rather than disappeared in their stead would rather make money playing music, their first love, than work an office job or continue to slog it off in unrewarding (both artistically and/or monetarily) solo careers? Yes, some people just come back, use an old name to get our attention, and then proceed to embarrass every last grain of respect their past catalog generated. And yes, some bands' nostalgia that built them up to be bigger than life are/were actually merely OK to blatantly awful bands who expose themselves by making the past present again. But can't we take each such reunion on individual merit? If a band who returns rehearses a lot, plays their butts off, and gives as much of themselves as in the past, and are pleased to find an audience made up of old fans (and those who discovered them posthumously who always dreamed of seeing them play), why shouldn't we be as excited to see them play as we were seeing them ten years ago?

In short, what is wrong with this scenario? Who is such an arbiter that they decide what older artists are allowed to continue or return? If people like **HOWARD DEVOTO** or **TV SMITH** want to leave the past in the past, and wish instead to do something completely different, we respect them for that, and (if we are enlightened) take an interest based on past abilities. But if others decide to pick up where they left off after a long hibernation, what's the harm? Why take a blase or cynical attitude if one truly appreciates what these groups gave us before they went to sleep?

Again, it seems the culprit is the inherent elitism of the college radio/alternative/post modern/college radio/avant garde crowd, one all of us who appreciate the music covered herein are a part of, willingly or no. What we and they find difficult to admit in ourselves is that like the rest of our rotten society, we have a morbid interest. We run down the street to view a fresh accident, and we're

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more likely to take an interest in a band when they're dead. It disturbs us that bands, unlike people can rise from the dead and start anew, particularly if our posthumous appreciation has actually increased the artists' following. Vincent Van Gogh died penniless, a commercially failing artist, a suicide. Were he able, perhaps upon discovering that suddenly his work was well loved, and was at long last profitable, perhaps he too would have risen from his grave, donned his old painters smock, and rejoined the land of the living. Absurd, yes, but isn't it true fans prefer such people dead or why wasn't his work famous while he was alive and creating? Why do Roy Orbison sales quadruple as soon as he dies, wasn't he making records for 24 years?

Hey folks, if you don't want to go to a concert featuring some old '77 band, or if you think the new Wire LP stinks, that's your prerogative and that's your taste. You're the consumer, you spend your money as you please. But if the reason for your lack of interest and even disdain is solely 'cause you like the past to stay past and it threatens you as the present, then that's your loss, and you ought to keep your selfish ownership trip to yourself, the rest of us will be enjoying the music, glad to have back an old favorite. I'm not that interested in the recent Rolling Stones, Kinks, or Jefferson Airplane (or the non-Tommy Who) tours, but that's because I've hated every record these bands have done the last 19 years! If they just want to play the music I like, I'll go! Like The Beach Boys, Bo Diddley or Jerry Lee Lewis reviews herein! Music you like is timeless, it's a pleasure and a privilege to see it performed well by the original artist, regardless of how old they are or how much you hate their current fans, or whatever!

In short, See you at The Buzzcocks' gigs.

EDITORIAL #2: THE INTRUSION OF CDs ON RECORD BUYERS, AND THE UNSPOKEN RIPOFF INVOLVED:

Who is that bewildered animal, seemingly lost and confused in what used to be his or her favorite haunt, the record store? Could it be the longtime record buyer who's trying to figure out what those silly plastic things on the shelf are, the ones with the same artwork and track listings as the familiar piece of vinyl in his/her paws?

A lot of us just chose to ignore those newfangled whatchamacallits, we said if we wanted CDs we head to the nearest bank. But the record industry, the hand we teeming masses feed from, have other plans. The new **PHIL COLLINS** record was originally going to be only available on CD and cassette, no vinyl. Well, who cares, who wants his waste products anyway?! Well the point is, could this be the start of a trend? Collins is a platinum selling superstar after all (even if he is, as one reviewer of Buster put it "the only actor who could play a train robber with a stocking mask over his head without actually having to wear the mask," but that's irrelevent). How soon 'til major labels start phasing out vinyl completely? A decade? Sooner? Who cares about major labels if all you buy are indies? Well, what if it becomes harder to buy a decent turntable? Sure it's a different case, but when is the last time you saw an 8-track player?

This editorial is not to bury or praise our new laser "friends" themselves, despite some longstanding prejudice for vinyl that might lead to a quick aversion for the new format. Rather, this is merely a contemplation of the pros and cons, with a much bigger point to make:

PROS: They don't scratch like records, they are advertised as lasting longer, they're durable, you can all but throw them around the room, let them collect dust, and otherwise abuse them without discernable effect. They fit much more music than LPs; even those records that do have more than 45 minutes of music (NY Dolls LPs, Buzzcocks' singles LP, Chameleons' 1st, Damned Strawberries are some of mine), suffer from reduced sound quality from having to cram too many grooves on one side of the disc. CD's easily accomodate 70+ minutes with no drop in quality, and can handle more just as easily if the label wants to pay more (as is the case with Mission of Burma's CD - 80 minutes and 8 seconds!!). They take up less space, and with their cases, are easier to transport and store. They sound better than records, almost too clear, as if you've been invited into the studio. CD players are almost as cheap as turntables these days too. No loss in sleeve artwork. And a lot of great out of print material is finding its way back to the shelves via CD reissues, a bonanza for those of us too young to have been there, whenever it was. So what are the drawbacks?

CONS: Ok, first lets dispel the myth that CDs are indestructable, though everyone seems to claim they are. A good friend of mine has a CD copy of Murmur that gets stuck, it makes REM sound like "Bhohemian Rhapsody" or something. Even if you pick a different track, that gets stuck too, the song it's on just repeats indefinitely until you intervene. He claims the problem is that he's played it hundreds of times, but still, we've been told that no matter how many times you play them, they'll be as good as the day they were purchased. Records may be more likely to depreciate, but with proper care, no record in my collection has ever disfunctioned to the point of being unplayable as in the case with this CD. It still remains to be seen whether CDs wear out over 10 or 15 years or so, we've heard much debate on this topic.

Another weakness is that CDs are not much of a format for the vinyl junkie's prized (and ever decreasing) format, the single. Then again, neither are 12" records, and that's all we seem to be able to find of many new singles' releases these days, if labels bother to release them at all! Capitol has apparently deleted their entire 7" catalog, bad news indeed, and those little CD singles don't seem to be much of a replacement.

No, it seems the prohibitive indictment of CDs are their price. A new CD LP is close to $12 to $15. This obviously hurts the consumer who must pay twice the cost of an LP or cassette (or nearly twice) to get the same piece of music, but it also puts a crimp in the CD buyer's ability to avail him or herself of more music, since with the same dough he or she would have bought two records, so when one grew stale, the other would be there to be played. This in turn hurts artists, since the consumer has spent as much and has bought one less release. This particularly affects new artists. Since it's more of a gamble to buy at those exorbitant prices, its no wonder consumers grow more conservative, a tendency well exploited by the marketers of established acts and especially oldies! The whole thing becomes compounded when we stop to think that our friends are buying on CD recordings what they already had on cassette or vinyl, instead of buying other recordings! This is disturbing, and some of the consequences have yet to be felt. And as an artist, do we want people having to pay that much for our work? I think not.

The worst thing though, is there is no reason for them to be this expensive. Everyone I know in the industry swears that CDs either cost exactly the same as vinyl, or at most nominally more, a matter of cents. I.E., they are ripping you off if you buy a CD! They are exploiting both good people's desire for a superior product, as well as the more affluent's trendy need to always have the best of the best. This is disgusting at best, unforgiveable at worst. CD purchases are a license to steal; even if one is willing to pay more for a better listening experience, there's no economical reason in the world that one should have to. When we find out that artists have been typically accepting a lower royalty rate for CD units shifted, under the premise that it's an "experimental market," (Source: Alan H. Siegel, Breaking In To The Music Business, Cherry Lane Books) the nausea sets in.

Yes CDs sound tempting, and even those who are vehemently opposed to them at the current price scheme may give in someday, voluntarily or by compulsion of a future dwindling market. But why is there no public outcry at this ripoff, why does no Congressional comittee not investigate? The promo CDs in the mail are fine with me, but I won't be buying any soon. The format is the pro, but the price is a con, as in swindle. $14 for an LP that should cost $8 is what we expect from organized crime.

TIM SOMMER'S VIEWS: PET SOUNDS

(Nothing could improve this magazine more than a regular column by Tim Sommer, in my mind, still both the best and most readable rock journalist of the late 70's/early 80's along with the well missed Kickboy Face (Claude Bessy) of Slash. Tim no longer writes much except his work for MTV news, so we're particularly proud to have him as our regular editorialist. We're thrilled to get his work if for no other reason than that we ourselves will have an opportunity to read it! Enjoy this piece about Pet Sounds. We did! Here's Tim (drumroll):

About this time you're innudated by all sorts of nonsense from every form of the media about what the best albums of the decade were, etc. I suppose these sort of lists, if they're to be of any worth at all, should be of records that moved or inspired you, or, due to the originality of their content or the enthusiasm with which they were produced, marked some kind of starting point or landmark, either personally or in a larger scope of musical influence. .

I'd be very hard pressed to create any sort of list for this year, much less this decade. Not because of the quality of the music made in the 1980's -- certainly, it was all there, and I would even chance to say it surpassed the fifties, sixties, or seventies -- but just because I don't trust my own memory, but more significantly, the landmark music that I became aware of in this decade, the music that moved me to create, or simply moved me to be damn happy that I owned a stereo or a walkman or a c.d. player, was music from earlier decades.

Which isn't to slight the great work of the 1980's. Off the top of my head, stuff like Sonic Youth's "Confusion is Sex," the Smith's "The Queen Is Dead," Public Image's "Metal Box/Second Edition," R.E.M.'s "Document," Metallica's "Master of Puppets," the Undertones "Positive Touch," and so on and so on (I know that isn't a very trendy list, but my mind isn't terribly fluid right now -- perhaps if Jack makes up a list, which would probably be a top thousand, not a top hundred, it would jog my memory) could hold their own against most anything at most any time. But in my mid twenties, the records that stayed consistently on my walkman/turntable etc were a couple of Kinks albums -- all made before 1970 -- a Can lp made before my voice had even changed, the bizarrely brilliant and appallingly unique 2 lp ouevre of an early Seventies German group called Neu, and the Beach Boys' Pet Sounds. And I also came to realize that Pet Sounds was in a class of its own. One could compile a list of the top ten albums of all time -- and Pet Sounds would be twice as good, twice as original, twice as startling, and twice as isolated (from what had come before it and what was to follow) than anything else on that list. It

THE BEACH BOYS-PET SOUNDS LP (1966, CAPITOL), AN "ISOLATED" MASTERWORK

simply deserves a list to itself, which makes sense, since it was created in a world of its' own.

A friend once said to me, while on acid, "All a musician can hope to do is capture a piece of Brian Wilson's mind." Or something like that.

I don't have the patience to write a detailed -- or even summary -- monograph on what Pet Sounds is, what it sounds like, and how it was made. I can only say that it has little to do with rock'n'roll, everything to do with rock'n'roll, and there is literally nothing else remotely like it. But I can hint at where it came from, and the place it finds in a listener.

It's a place where one is only at home with his or her art, where one is only at peace with the sounds that one hears in their head that they have not heard elsewhere. Other people gifted (or plagued?) with the zealous mission of attempting to loyally reproduce the unique sounds they hear in their heads (as opposed to just writing songs, or telling stories, or making people dance or laugh, or painting pictures -- all worthy missions, but not what we're discussing here) have been plagued by pretention, conceit, or by collabortaors with differing visions; but, for (as they say) one brief, shining moment, Brian Wilson wasn't plagued by any of these things at the time he made Pet Sounds. He was responding to a solitary, lonely muse; only comfortable with and answerable to the broad, emotional panorama he was hearing somewhere to the right of his one good ear, for the only time in his life he had the freedom to reproduce those sounds. His band, with very different concerns and motives to his own, were on tour without him; drug dependency and self-obsession with his tortured soul were still a year or so away. Wilson made a work of one piece that had little to do with his band or the sound of any rock'n'roll up to that time; the grace of Pet Sounds owed something to Soundtracks and Spector; the tension to traditional rock teen angst with an unusually vulnerable twist; the optimism to the awareness that anything is possible in his world, despite doom, dad, and roamntic frustration that could intrude at any moment. But the sound on that record owes itself, more than anything else, to the idea that between a mind and a tape deck, anything is possible. Anything.

Full of mistakes, embarrassing confessions and admissions of defeat, a minimum of guitar playing, clumsy gestures towards pop and the past, it somehow all works; it humbles all future efforts -- no matter how successful or spectacular -- towards creating a cohesive single work out of a cycle of songs.

And it humbles all future Wilson/Beach Boys works as well, although both Smiley Smile and 20/20 belong in anyone's record collection. Wilson never again had such freedom, such courage, or perahps more accurately, such discipline; at best, he was able to either imitate brilliance or cohesiveness (re: his recent solo lp), give in to Barrett-like quirkiness, simplicity, amateurishness, and honesty (Beach Boys Love You), or inspire his band to pull together to make inspired and tough group efforts (20/20, Sunflower, Holland, Surf's Up). But essentially, Pet Sounds was a one-shot, and one searches the rest of the Beach Boys catalogue for moments that reproduce its brilliance -- and, sadly, one usually finds that those moments that one does come across are either old tracks meant for Smile, the aborted follow-up to Pet Sounds, or incredibly stark and sad monuments to despair and helplessness, like 20/20's "I Went To Sleep." And, in fact, one searches the rest of rock's catalogue for moments that equal Pet Sounds; and that's just what they are and remain -- moments.

Interestingly, the album I would personally venture comes closest to Pet Sounds in terms of its' stark honesty, striking originality, and completeness as a single piece, is one that achieves its' genius almost by accident, and by its' very

incompleteness -- Syd Barrett's second solo album, The Madcap Laughs. Where Syd is naked, Brian is clothed in massive and exotic studio trappings; where Brian is full of intent and vision, Syd is stumbling and desperately naive; and where Brian is passionate about his masterpiece and tensely in control of it, Syd lacked control over both his finished effort, and, really, the individual pieces as they went down on tape. Still, both produced stunning refelctions of the completely unique things that were going on between the ears of their creators, and which no one else was capable of reproducing; and both sang virtually without any pretension or easily identifiable influence.

Anyway, I listened to Died Pretty a lot this year, I like Ian McCulloch's album a lot, I thought Throwing Muses made a pretty good record, the Mekons turned out one of the most lyrically provocative albums to come down the pipe in a long, long time, and it's been years since I've seen a band as happy to be on stage and as much fun to watch as Les Negresses Vertes; but I didn't listen to anything half as much -- probably one-tenth as much -- as I listened to Pet Sounds. Today, over 23 years since its' release, it's an lp that still speaks volumes to anyone who wants to know why it's worth sticking to your creative guns, and why a musician's best friend isn't pricey equipment or someone who can play all the same Mudhoney songs you can play, but the sounds you hear in your own head, no matter how unrealizable or bizarre they might seem. There's a way to realize that shit, no matter how impractical, untraditional, un-musical, or utterly simple they might be. Christ that sounds preachey. Try this, which at least I can blame on someone else: "Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with evergrowing insistency. Remember that our sons

and grandsons are going to do things that will stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty." -- Daniel Burnham, 1907

happy holidays 5 Decmber '89 (20 days late! Sorry Jack/thanks)

BUZZCOCKS U.S. REUNION TOUR!

BUZZCOCKS U.S. TOUR, November 1989:
I've always thought it sort of boring to read "Tour Diaries," (they're more animated in conversation anyway) so better to just review the shows.

BUZZCOCKS at Living Room, Providence, RI 11/7/89:
This was history. The first Buzzcocks gig in almost exactly nine years, of all places, in Rhode Island. There were a couple of things that should have hindered this show's success. a)Due to unforseen circumstances, Buzzcocks were only able to rehearse 4-5 times in London last week. For a band that had not played together for nearly a decade, that's precious little to begin with. Add in the fact the **STEVE GARVEY** hadn't played his bass in five years, and **JOHN MAHER** hadn't picked up a drumstick in three years, and that the whole quartet had to relearn a 90 minute set they'd doubtlessly forgotten, and it all adds up to barely any rehearsal! b)Buzzcocks were scheduled to fly to New York the day before 11/6, with a rehearsal planned to check out the hired equipment. Unfortunately, their visas/ work permits were not sorted out until early this morning 11/7 the day of the first show! Thus they awoke at 4:30 AM this morning (11:30 PM 11/6 our time!) to fly to Boston and go straight to Providence. Playing the 1st gig on unfamiliar gear on a few hours sleep (and being up 24 straight hours

A SCENE WE NEVER THOUGHT WE'D SEE AGAIN: A WILD CROWD AT TRENTON'S CITY GARDENS CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S REALLY THE BUZZCOCKS, 11/12/89. STEVE DIGGLE SINGS "AUTONOMY." PETE SHELLEY LOOKS ON.(PHOTO JACK RABID)

besides!) after a 6 hour flight is not ideal! The band yawned throughout the set. c)Steve Garvey, who'd flown to his home New York on the 5th, almost cancelled the show due to an illness he's been suffering from for 4 days, and he's steadily gotten worse. Sure enough, they started somewhat slowly on "I Don't Know What to do in my Life" and "I Don't Mind," not dragging at all, but far away from the live Buzzcocks' push of old. The club was sold out, and was packed solid with young and not-so-young. The ubiquitous frenzied pushing, shoving, and occasional slamming began right from the first number. This was a show to watch safely pinned against the side wall, certainly nowhere near the stage (crush city)! After a number of tracks from their singles, "Love You More," "Autonomy," "You Say You Don't Love Me," "Noise Annoys," "What Do You Know," "Why She's a Girl From the Chainstore" and a real surprise "Promises" (which guitarist **STEVE DIGGLE** revealed had rarely been played live by the band before this night!), suddenly there was three lesser known Love Bites tracks, two of which "Walking Distance" (the only B-cocks song ever written by Steve Garvey) and "E.S.P" had never been played on their three previous U.S. tours, and the other "Nothing Left" (which **THAT PETROL EMOTION** was covering on their last tour) had only been done on the first tour with **GANG OF FOUR** supporting. Slowly they were starting to come together, particularly "E.S.P," the first number to really attain the groove of the original. Then suddenly, as if they were finally warming up, as if they were finally starting to remember how they once were and what they used to do, they started to pick up steam. A woozy "Why Can't I Touch It" a heavy "Harmony in my Head" and a spirited, if greatly slower "Everybody's Happy Nowadays" started the ascent; "I Believe" in all it's 7 minute buildup brought at last the glorious, awesome rush we'd waited all night for, as the "There is no love in this world anymore" lines repeated over and over to the crash of Maher's cymbals and Diggle's sustained neo-windmill guitar hits, which smacked the audience in the gut for the full 5 seconds until the next one followed on schedule. With such a climax, it would have seemed the set was over (they have used it as a closer in the past), but the best three were the last, when, zoom, they were back to their old form! Holy moly! Maher's booming rack tom pattern introduced a magnificent version of "Moving Away From The Pulsebeat" (he hasn't played in three years? You're kidding me!), with its jagged guitars playing off Garvey's looping bass lines. 6 minutes later, this too seemed like it must be the end, as the crowd let out the same massive roar it had at the end of every song. But out came "What Do I Get" and "Ever Fallen in Love," and damned if the famous "wall of guitar" sound wasn't its former force. Maher's consectutive drum rolls on the choruses of "What Do I Get" kicked, but it was the dense wave of Diggle and **PETE SHELLEY** that made these songs rush through the mind like the studio version. As the band left the stage the drenched mob called them back (that was never in doubt) for two similarly blistering knockouts of the oldest songs, "Oh Shit" followed by "Boredom." As Shelley sang "You see I came here from nowhere/And I'm going straight back there" and later the screamed "Get your hands out of my trousers," the rising emotion and tension in his voice made these old songs real killers that made the head spin with delirium. The packed house tried for a solid three minutes to shout down the DJ music, but the band was too tired from the long set and the travel/lack of

BUZZCOCKS

MORE PHOTOS FROM CITY GARDENS

(PHOTOS BY JACK RABID)

rest/illness, only one tonight. Judging from the response the entire crowd knew every song, and from the dazed expressions, had obviously tapped into the sweaty emotion of the evening, even though they were almost entirely unaware that they were witnessing the first ever reunion gig! Sure enough, Buzzcocks had large grins on throughout the set, frequently chatting to each other mid-song, playing with their instruments over the crowd's heads, and occasionally even embracing each other! Diggle seemed particularly overcome with joy; one gets the feeling he was the saddest over their breakup, and is out to really enjoy this tour. He was shouting to the audience every time he stepped up to the mike! Garvey even had a mic and talked to the people (a first)! OK, you wouldn't expect them to reunite if they didn't think it was a good idea, but who could expect the obvious glee up there (other than Maher, the old sunglasses hidden stoneface, who expresses himself in his hands). The other thing that was <u>really</u> noticeable is how much better a singer Diggle is since the old days. Fronting his own band, and doing all the vocals on two LPS, an EP and 5 singles has improved him significantly; where he once spit out a gruff, garbled, unintelligible hard voice that worked to stay in tune, now he's as clear as Shelley on the 3 songs he sings lead on ("Chainstore," "Autonomy," "Harmony in My Head") and all his "oh-oh" backings. Great to see. What else to say? The band made a number of small mistakes, they'd lose the beat for a second here or there, but they remembered the material well, and played their tired, under-rehearsed butts off; Thus they were rewarded with the same mass adulation they'd had on their last tour which also stopped at the Living Room 11/24/80, although at a different location downtown. Boston tomorrow and Thursday. Thursday is already sold out. Work forbids me to attend, but after this kind of magic, it'll be hell waiting for The Ritz Friday. Pinch me! Are the Buzzcocks really back! Did I really see that? Just the thought made one delirious, 500-600 worth on that score! We walk a gilded dream.

<u>BUZZCOCKS</u> at Ritz, 11/10/80

This was the big show. Two or Three Thousand packed into the new Ritz. Lots of old faces, people we haven't seen since the late 70's or early 80's (and some people we only see at SLF, Damned, Stranglers, etc. gigs). Many reminisced about seeing Buzzcocks here on their '79 and '80 tours. With great satisfaction, I noted the presence of several who had in the past had expressed their sorrow over having never seen Buzzcocks, due to youth, circumstances, or the difficulty of having discovered the band post-'81, when they were no longer with us. In my own hometown, this show was for them, though the thrill was equal, for fans both old and new. The pre-show "buzz" was incredible, and from crowd reaction, more so than any new Ritz gig I've seen to date, the band went over a storm. It was amazing how much they'd tightened up, after two shows in Boston as well as the opener in Providence. Jet lag was no longer present, and though inadequate rest was still a problem (Diggle and Shelley exchanged a prominent laugh on the "no sleep at night" lyric in "What Do I Get"- We're told they were up 'til 3 in the morning in Boston talking), the band was lurching forward more on the attack, spurred on by the deafening mob. Like the last NY gig at the old Ritz 11/23/80, the whole crowd <u>once again</u> (deja vu) sang along at the top of their lungs on most of the singles (<u>Singles Going Steady</u>), and were as wild with appreciation as back then,

probably more so since the mood was like getting something you really didn't deserve. The shining moment of this show, one to remember for the rest our years, was the end of "I Believe," which this time finished the set (Better slot). On the repeating "There is No Love in This World Anymore" lines, again Shelley stopped singing into the mic and merely mouthed the words. The audience, which was already singing, was thus egged on further, and a couple of thousand voices singing this curious line were as loud as two guitars, a bass and a set of drums. Really emotional! The band looked ecstatic. John Maher, who's been complaining of blisters on his hands, has nevertheless come the longest way since Tuesday. His famous snare fills were sharper, he lost the beat less, and is again adopting the machine like explosiveness he once had. The wall of guitars define the Buzzcocks sound, but really, unbeknownest to most, it's Garvey and Maher who carry the band, the overwhelming reason, for instance, why seeing Shelley or Diggle play Buzzcocks' songs with their adept solo bands paled so much. Even after such a long layoff, this pair is such an irreplaceable rhythm section; not for their timing and unbelievable abilities and tightness (like Ruts, Minutemen/Firehose, Comsat Angels), but for their overwhelming power, unlike anyone else's going. Everyone was drained after this show, band and fans (who called for a third encore. Tonight we at least got a 2nd encore, "Something's Gone Wrong Again"). The best show NY saw this year, by far, both musically, and particularly, audience wise. Could anyone else in 1989 'cause this kind of heated reaction? Not likely! It's amazing, how, just by reappearing and being everything they once were, how Buzzcocks are so far above any band going today. You could argue this is just my bias. But how would you argue with a crowd this insane? Let's face it, it used to be like that a lot a decade ago. This was not a blast from the past, this was a call to improve the present. We need more bands with this talent, songwriting ability, direct force and (and THIS is the missing element these days) outright appeal. Buzzcocks ooze appeal.

BUZZCOCKS at Theater of The Living Arts, Philadelphia PA, 11/11/89: Next day in Philadelphia, a much smaller place. Worst of all it has seats, so it only holds 400 people, in a space that could easily accomodate twice that. The gig is their 5th straight sellout, but the crowd is almost tame without even being compared to last night's wave of emotion. Though the right section stood for the majority of the gig, the center (there is no left) sat on their butts, which will put a damper on the best of gigs (at a Connecticut gig ten years ago, Shelley once sat through a whole set himself in response to a sitting crowd). Still, though tame, the audience wasn't dead; the noise level after songs was appreciable enough, and the band was called out for two legitimate encores, during which even the center section had arisen. Interestingly, they played technically even better than in NY, but the spark was missing in places (the night previous was a non-stop rollercoaster) and the lack of soundcheck (they shopped for guitars in NY instead) plagued the early going where the hits in a row ("I Don't Mind," "Love You More," "Promises") usually blow away all doubts about the reunion. Yet even in this comparatively lesser performance, the old fire would spurt out again. "Fast Cars" found them leaping all over the stage. "E.S.P." really grooved, with Shelley and Diggle standing side by side at the end for the double guitar line that is the basis for the song. Garvey accidentally tumbled off the drum riser and got up laughing after playing on despite his prone position. And "Nothing Left" is beginning to get back that mean lowdrive. A great show if not their best.

BUZZCOCKS at City Gardens, Trenton, NJ 11/12/89
Like Ritz part two! First of all, at least some 20 or 30 people (and that's just familiar suspects) who were at the Ritz were also here; it's the first time City Gardens advertised in NY's Voice, that helped. Plus, there were many who I thought would be at Ritz. Plus equally mad South Jerseyians! Forget Philadelphia and even Providence. City Gardens, though not sold out, was full back to the bar/door, and everyone was pogoing and screaming various song titles (usually "Orgasm Addict") in unison, 'causing Pete to comment "No, not that one!" (Buzzcocks tried it in sound check in Boston; Maher wants to hear the record again before they play it live). Not a single outbreak of slamming occured as in small spaces at Providence and at Ritz. Just a mass of gonzo Buzzcocks fanatics, all of whom seemed as if they would have sold their souls to the first demon who could have brought them this show. Shelley is the one with the cold now, so we got no 2nd encore, but a good 1/3 of the crowd tried their damnest to shout down the DJ music after the first encore of "Fast Cars" (which for some reason they'd skipped even though it was on the set list) and an "Oh Shit" that was so intense, it brought out a frenzy in the excited crowd. It's a wonder no one was calling out for coolant for their overheated engines (since they sell earplugs at the bar, maybe they should sell Prestone too). "Oh Shit" was the molten finish, an appropriate crown to a show so exciting some of us wanted to melt. Maher again surprises by improving every day; he did two snare to cymbal fills we've never seen him do before; and whereas in the first couple of gigs he was shying away from full around-the-set fills, staying instead predominently on the snare, now he's adding some that weren't even in the oprginals. Diggle started singing about the fall of the Berlin Wall for his "Autonomy," and nearly got pulled into the crowd on two occasions. Several people in the audience were straining with their hands on "Why Can't I Touch it" (cute) and overall, the level of band/crowd interaction was tremendous. Perhaps The Ritz was the huge show for the ages. In the less formidable and far louder (way lower ceilings), long box-like City Gardens, it was like a New Years Crowd! The emotion is staggering to those of us who've grown used to making do with an almost perfunctionary level of it at our contemporary concerts. This tour is turning into some kind of love-in, you get the feeling the crowd wants to wrap them up for X-mas. Everyone has the same feeling: "pinch me." There were so many people waiting for something they knew would never happen, and now, poof, here it is before them in all the might, splendor, and total energy/total pop that they'd always imagined it was once. All they had to do was show up! Some people were saying that even after losing their collective voices and finding themselves so drenched in their own sweat they'd swear the ceiling must have leaked, they still couldn't believe it. Even after four shows, I can't either. If my alarm clock awakes me out of this very long dream I will pound that thing so hard with both my fists that it won't even resemble a bag of bolts. Buzzcocks in '89? A miracle!

THE BUZZCOCKS AT 9:30 CLUB, WASHINTON D.C., 11/13/89. SEE JOHN IN BACK.(PHOTO JACK RABID)

THE BUZZCOCKS AT 9:30 CLUB, WASHINGTON D.C., 11/13/89

I've seen some great shows at 9:30, like The Nils in '87, The Chameleons U.S. debut in '85, Bad Brains/Stimulators in '82, etc. But, in each case, the bands were so excruciatingly loud it took away from the enjoyment. Buzzcocks were no exception. A decade ago they played the Ontario theater (I think it was called), a bigger, better place. This time it's 2 nights at 9:30. What 9:30 gains in being a small club it loses in the volume. And of course it was packed solid, since with the big back room they fill up the place, but when the band goes on all the people from there try to crowd into the front room. Everyone paid to see the same show, but there's really only room for 1/2 the people! As a result, one had to fight his or her way to the front, away from the pulverizing P.A. speakers, in order to get a decent hearing, and with such a mob in the way it took half the set for me. All this aside, the crowd was pretty animated, and two surprises made the trip worthwhile. First, the encore was "Orgasm Addict" (!!!!), the first time they'd played that live in 10 years, and sure enough, they didn't come in altogether, but nobody cared. This is the song everyone went nuts on, as expected since it was the most requested all night as at the other gigs. Then for the 2nd encore, they stretched out "Something's Gone Wrong Again" for twice it's normal length, jamming away all over it without losing it's repetitive grip. More abrasive than the LP version (guitars scraped more) and way more out of control, they turned this tale of frustration into a story of losing control, a completely different idea. Very climactic, and a new wrinkle. Funny enough, the stage is far from the back stage area, so the band just stood on the side of the stage waiting to see if they'd get the encore (not that it was in doubt, but it's customary to get the invitation first), which was kind of an odd sight. The band was sweating so profusely (even more of a steambox than last night in Trenton), they were toweling themselves off after every song, Shelley even missed half of one of the songs due to the heat and his lingering cold. Yet, they were all over the stage as before, must have lost a few pounds. Actually, we were lucky to see the show at all, as we had to drive 70 miles an hour all the way from NYC to make it, and we only missed 1 song. Don't try this at home folks. Back to work again tomorrow, will miss tomorrow's show, which is too bad, "Times Up" is supposedly coming out of the closet.

BUZZCOCKS AT PHANTASY THEATER, CLEVELAND, OH 11/16/89

Another gig I almost missed. Pardon the "tour diary" bit here, but this is kind of interesting. Worked 'til 7, had an 8 PM Flight out of Laguardia, due to arrive Cleveland at 9:30, which is unfortunately the time Buzzcocks are due to hit the stage. Didn't know it was an early show when I booked the ticket, and no changes are allowed, damn fascist airlines. I get to Laguardia OK thanks to a fast cab ride, but every time I look at the Continental screen the flight is getting pushed back 15 minutes, and I'm getting antsy. Worse, rumor floats that it's snowing hard in Cleveland (it's 63 and mild in New York), news that's confirmed in a scary way when 5 people show up and ask Continental to honor their U.S. Air tickets since their flight into Cleveland has been canceled due to the snow storm! Now I'm thinking maybe I shouldn't even get on the plane at all, maybe US Air is prudent and Continental would rather gamble our lives than lose our fares, particularly as they take on the U.S. Air people! Two reasons to be nervous now! We finally board at 9:00, damn, but of course, it's not 'til 9:35 we take off, and this gig has to be history, if I even make it alive! The captain apologizes for the delay, saying it was caused by the need to de-ice the plane for the snow in Cleveland, which makes good sense but I don't think the Buzzcocks will have to de-ice their guitars before they go on. The pilot hits the gas pedal, though, we pull in at 10:30, after a frightening landing where the snow and wind were playing tricks with the plane, and visibility was about zero out my window. Good thing I hadn't eaten in a while. I've got a ride from the airport, but what else could go wrong, due to the snow we have to drive 20 mph all the way to the theater from the airport, and everyone's skidding all over the place. I fully expect the crowd to be streaming out of the theater as we arrive, but everything is quiet. I sprint in to the place, and I hear the end of "Moving Away From The Pulsebeat!" I only missed 1/3 of the set! They must have been late too. What luck. IF I only saw the encores that would have been great, it's already 11! 'Course, I missed the opening set by another '77 reunion band, Cleveland's **PAGANS**, who went on at 8-8:30 and I really wanted to see them again, but the way things were going, it's great to see anything other than the janitors mopping up and bouncers advising me in their ever so kind way where I should put my ass. Too bad this theater is a bit of a disaster, the p.a. is woeful. Typical, get 800 people to pay and then give 'em a p.a. so muddy you can't hear anything. But, as one should do in these cases, don't sit in the back and grumble, go up front and catch the stage sound, the real amps and real drums and monitor vocals were indeed much better. I'm getting used to people going crazy and singing along on all the songs, particularly as the set progresses into the bigger hits and audience favorites near the end. They're playing well, they're picking up steam, everyone's into it. Tonight's new wrinkle is that as the set ends with "I Believe," each band member leaves one by one until Shelley is the last one there, leading

the crowd in singing that ever mournful refrain without singing into the mike. He really likes hearing those lyrics coming back at him 800 strong tonight, and every night besides! The place pounds on the stage for the encores, and a minute or so later, people are screaming their heads off the ending to "Oh Shit" which is both amusing and exciting at the same time. The band ends in their usual chaos, a hail of feedback from Diggle's guitar, and the crowd roaring. Another exhausting, tumultuous show, can't get used to it even after so many times! Still a daze.

BUZZCOCKS AT ST. ANDREWS HALL, DETROIT, MI 11/17/89

Man is it cold in Detroit! Like 7 degrees and a stiff wind. I hate this city as before, and the weather doesn't help. St. Andrews is especially cold, a lot of people leave their coats on. This looks like another old, falling apart church hall, but unlike last night, the p.a. is strong and clear. Unfortunately, Detroit is punk rock city, much of the audience is decked out in Misfits' style black and some of the girls really went overboard on the makeup, they're more like witches (Halloween was two weeks ago!) than punks, but that doesn't bug me, the stage divers and slam dancers do. Compared to New York it's nothing, just like 15 or 20 people out of the 6 or 700 people there, but it still can be distracting. OK, usually you just go to the back or the sides, but it's the Buzzcocks and tommorow's the last show I see, so tonight I'm going to be against the stage come hell or high water, an attitude that backfires with 45 seconds to go in the 2nd and last encore when, after a night of successfully ducking the series of sub-humans flying over my head (why don't you just watch the band and dance like normal people, cretins!), one uses me for a step ladder (does my head look like a rung?) just as one already up there decides to use me for a landing pit. Haven't had a headache like that in years. As for the show, this was an emotional one, you should have seen how long they were all out there shaking hands with the people hurling themselves at the stage to get a grip of one of the three outstretched hands ('cept Maher, who casually saunters off as always). A solid minute or two goes by and they're still pressing flesh, pleased with the way they've gone over. And yes, they were a powerhouse tonight, the stage sound was impeccable. The first 2/3 they're great. The last 1/3 they rise in ensemble as if a code was finally broken, for the first time on the tour they are so in sync they're a machine, one working so fast, rushing the senses. Maher admits afterward that he really found the groove near the end, and it was something. This was a hell of a show, it was bound to happen; they're completely, totally back to where they were before. Just 10 gigs and 3 rehearsals. Man! Despite severe fatigue (only 4 hours sleep in Cleveland, long drive next day), it takes hours to finally drift off to sleep, the buzz is just too strong.

BUZZCOCKS AT CABARET METRO, CHICAGO, IL 11/18/89

Took the train today. As we were sitting in Kalamazoo, Michigan for 2 hours waiting to be rescued by another locomotive (since ours is defective), I think that last night was the best I'll see them play, even though NY and Trenton were better shows ('cause the crowds were so incredible). Besides, now I've discovered I'm very sick, so I won't enjoy tonight much. Wrong, wrong wrong. Cabaret Metro is the show I'll remember from this tour the rest of my life, the one that was beyond mortal, somehow.

3/4 OF THE BUZZCOCKS AT ST. ANDREWS HALL, DETROIT MICHIGAN 11/17/89 (PHOTO JACK RABID)

Maybe it's Naked Raygun's influence, but Chicago is Buzzcocks' crazy. People know every song, and they're treating Buzzcocks better than 17th century kings, better than gods. Metro is perfect size, holds like 1000, balcony is pretty close. The crowd so loud between songs as to drown out polite conversation, and who has anything to say anyway! The overwhelming vision from this show is the way Diggle was treated on the 4 songs he sings lead on. He looks like he's going to cry, the people are grabbing his legs, trying to pull him into the crowd, screaming at him the whole show. He's singing so well, his arms outstretched out to his sides as he sings "I want you, autonomy" only to hear the echo of the crowd singing it back to him. As he sings his improvised lyrics at the end about the fall of the Berlin wall, "and just like East Berlin, autonomy" it's almost as if he's being set free at last too, from his 8 years of relative obscurity and neglect from an almost disdainful public. Like a lot of people who found that people have short memories and don't give you a credit rating for your good works, but rather tell you to give up already, he's beyond relief, but more true and total appreciation of being appreciated himself at long last. I'm not saying he's misty eyed outwardly, he just seems somehow as if he's crying inside, you almost never see someone look so truly at peace, so truly, remarkably happy. "Why She's a Girl From the Chainstore" comes in like a bomb dropping, rumbles around for a second, then comes zooming out with Diggle's voice sounding kinder and more angelic than ever, "waiting for someone to marry her," the sympathy is real. "Harmony in my Head" ignites the crowd. It seems as if he's found the town that realizes at last what Diggle brought to Buzzcocks, that his attitude (especially) and absolutely charming love of playing (as well as some of the most exciting rhythm guitar playing we've ever heard), and legs churning, head shaking effort is a show in itself, when one cares to look past the obvious focal point of Shelley. Shelley of course is the leader, and accords the respect and attention he deserves, in his almost

PETE SHELLEY (R) AND STEVE DIGGLE (L) SLASH AWAY AT THEIR GUITARS AT ST. ANDREWS HALL, DETROIT, MICHIGAN 11/17/89. A HOT SHOW ON A BRUTALLY COLD NIGHT (PHOTO JACK RABID)

pixie yet commanding way he handles his guitar so smoothly as that voice hits the p.a. That voice is the one that is responsible for the overwhelming feeling of affection this crowd has for this band, but this is an educated, knowing crowd of Buzzcockaholics, who know and obsess on each instrument as well, one that has as much come for the wall of power and drive that they're famed for. It's a mixture of euphoria and disbelief, as the popcorn popper in the audience churns the people around, people are amazed that their obvious favorite band is playing but that they're this good. Damn if they're not even better than last night, as the last 1/3 of last night, with this bezerk crowd to get under their feet. Ritz, Trenton, Metro, (I hear Boston too), they are the show of the year for these people, you can tell, and the feeling is indescribable with such a frenzied participation. Garvey as always comes to the other side of the stage and puts his bass into the crowd. His hands are a blur on the start of his "Walking Distance," and he's really killing us on "Autonomy" and on the step ladder lines on "Moving Away From the Pulsebeat" which is propelled by Maher's drums, but it's Garvey who carries the tune. Garvey almost gets kicked into the crowd by Diggle (he should have, they're all using wireless guitars, he wouldn't have pulled over an amp or anything), but Diggle was only kidding. All 3 are making jokes into each others ears, they're having the best time. Then there is Maher. "Moving Away From the Pulsebeat" is some kind of revelation, the pound pound pound of the toms cascading throughout the assemblage who drank it up like water after a basketball match. People shouted his name as he was soloing near the end. His fills on "What Do I Get," "Nothing Left," "Fast Cars" and "What Do You Know" were awesome, quick, sharp bursts of machine gun fire that cut through the chord changes with the force of battering ram or a Carl Banks' sack. "I Believe" drives the show into its transcendent moment, over and over the crowd sings, as they did in Providence, NY, Philly, Trenton, DC, Cleveland and Detroit before, over and over the cymbals crash, Diggle flails Townsend like on the power chords, Shelley keep the tag line coming (eh - eh - eh -eh), and the bass speeds along like an unstoppable, runaway train to oblivion. As in Detroit, the crowd keeps singing it after the band has left the stage. Tonight is the only time we get all 4 songs in the encore (they never did dust off "Times Up" it seems, not even in DC the 2nd night), which is fitting for such a colossal, mind bending, experience as this show was. "Boredom," "Oh Shit," "Orgasm Addict" and the extended version of "Something's Gone Wrong Again," each has a turn being tossed out into the maddening crowd, driven over the edge by hot song after even hotter song. How does one leave a show like this? Even after the loud calls for a 3rd encore go unheeded the buzz continues like no one wanted to leave. Haven't seen a show like this, this emotion packed, this extraordinary, this melting of band and almost too into it crowd, this almost cataclysmic adrenalin rush of one of the greatest bands in history playing as well as humans can play and being received as if nothing else in the world ever mattered but this hour and 45 minutes. It was over, no one could believe it. Heard some people planning to go to Milwaukee's show the next night, but I'm sick and there's work Monday. Tried to think what was the last show this exciting. Surely few non-Buzzcocks shows ever got this high, The Clash at the Palladium that first tour 2/79, some Bunnymen shows in '81 and '84, early Bad Brains, Ruts DC in DC, Undertones at Irving Plaza, Gang of 4 supporting Buzzcocks at Irving Plaza, Chameleons in Cleveland, Minor Threat at Gildersleeves, Weirdos in SF, gigs where the band was a notch above anything I'd ever seen and the crowd was as insane. You can't appreciate that, you can't compare them in the heat of the moment, at this point in time, for all I knew this was the greatest show I'd ever seen, at least since Buzzcocks' 11/80 Ritz show. I'll tell you, I completely forgot I was sick, that's the first time that ever happened. No more shows, but this is the one I'd come to see, the one that made all the traveling, bad eating habits, lack of sleep, and now illness worth it, the kind of show that you think you were the luckiest man or woman on the face of the earth to have seen, to have felt, to have lived. These words may not seem credible to those not as intense about the band as the 1000 people here tonight, and for the most part, the other 8 or 9000 people who were at the other shows, or, we easily imagine, the other shows on the 3 week tour. We all have our favorite bands, and the more you like the music in advance the more you get into the show. So you could dismiss these (this) accounts (account) as being the biased ravings of a fanatic, and I know I give you cause for thinking so, since I am fanatical about them. But what I say to you is that there are 1000's of us who rate Buzzcocks as being somehow above all the other bands we've ever admired in our time, and none of us thousands ever thought we'd see them again, a passion that far surpassed for instance, the Damned and SLF shows, maybe 4 times as much, a excitement level that has not been reached at any other show out of the hundreds and hundreds I've seen even were I merely a completely impartial reporter covering the shows, particularly at the 3 I cite as being otherwordly. You just have to believe it best you can, you just have to imagine hearing thousands of people singing song after song, or at least on that solitary, lonely, weight-filled line, 16-20 times, over and over "There is no love in this world anymore," thousands! No one could make me believe I'd ever see that for <u>any</u> band, at <u>any</u> show had I not been there, then and now.

There's talk of them coming back next spring, after Japan, Europe and England are done with. Or they'll start a new record if they're signed by then, currently there's more than one US major who has expressed the intent to sign them, so that's quite likely. If they ever do come back, at any time, for any reason, this lineup in tact, with the kind of attitude they had this time (a bigger surprise even then their almost easy return to their past greatness, they never had this going for them to this degree in the past), just go, just go, just go. Everyone deserves a concert like one of these 3, particularly Chicago's, at least once in a lifetime. That's what we follow music for. Satori!

DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
I DON'T MIND
LOVE YOU MORE
PROMISES
CHAINSTORE
AUTONOMY
NOTHINGS LEFT
PULSE BEAT
NOISE ANNOYES
SAY YOU DON'T
E.S.P.
WALKING DISTANCE
WHY CAN I TOUCH IT
EVERYBODY'S HAPPY
HARMONY IN MY HEAD
WHAT DO YOU KNOW
WHAT DO I GET.
FAST CARS
EVER FALLEN IN LOVE
I BELIEVE
THINGS GONE WRONG AGAIN
OH SHIT
BOREDOM

BUZZCOCKS' SET LIST, 9:30 CLUB, WASHINGTON D.C., NOVEMBER 13, 1989.

BUZZCOCKS AT CABARET METRO, CHICAGO 11/18/89

PHOTOS: JACK RABID

LIVE! LIVE!

BAD BRAINS (from NY, City Gardens, Trenton 8/6/89)

I don't know how to judge Bad Brains. Like everyone else, I'm thrilled that the original '78 to '87 lineup is back; nothing else could be the Bad Brains, we didn't need the Ritz gig without singer **H.R.** and drummer/brother **EARL HUDSON** to know that! But the question remains, what is the standard, the unbelieveable (literally) live gigs of the Bad Brains from '78-'83, or other live bands? Compared to others, the Brains are still one of the finest live bands in the U.S. However, they're about 1/2 as good as they once were, when they were twice as good as anybody else on the planet, an awesome (yes!) hardcore band. If you need proof, just get their self-titled ROIR cassette LP (recently issued on CD, a first for ROIR), and just try to imagine that even more intense, more tight, more powerful. As someone who's seen them play 70 times or so (though only 5 or 6 the last few years), they're a disappointment to behold in their relative twilight. It's also discouraging that they're now at the height of their popularity, so most of the new fans will never know what they've missed. Perhaps they're better off that way, certainly they'll still think Bad Brains are sensational! Lots of old stuff (thankfully), lots of I Against I, lots of the new LP (including a song fashioned out of the instrumental that introduces the song "I Against I"), and strangest of all, two 10 minute breaks so they could cool off, and H.R. playing the trumpet instead of singing on a few tracks! Bizzare! What posesses him to do the vocal line of "F.V.K." with his trumpet instead of his voice? Particularly since he's a phenomenal singer, and a below average trumpet player! Guitarist **DR KNOW** still hasn't found his old precision edge, but he still has the fastest hand this side of Johnny Ramone, and bassist **DARRYL JENNIFER** still is the quiet leader on stage right. Earl is slower and has to work harder to keep up than before, yet you'd still be hard pressed to find many who can play hardcore (and reggae and funk too!) better than he, at blinding speeds, and the skankiest reggae rhythms. Hearing him back H.R. vocally on "I and I Survive" is still a huge treat too, great voices run in the family. A hot band, a very good show. Just make me forget Max's, The Playroom, CBGB, Studio 9, Pep. Lounge, Bonds, A7, 171A, Roseland, Rock Hotel, 9:30, etc., and I'll be "Happy Jack."

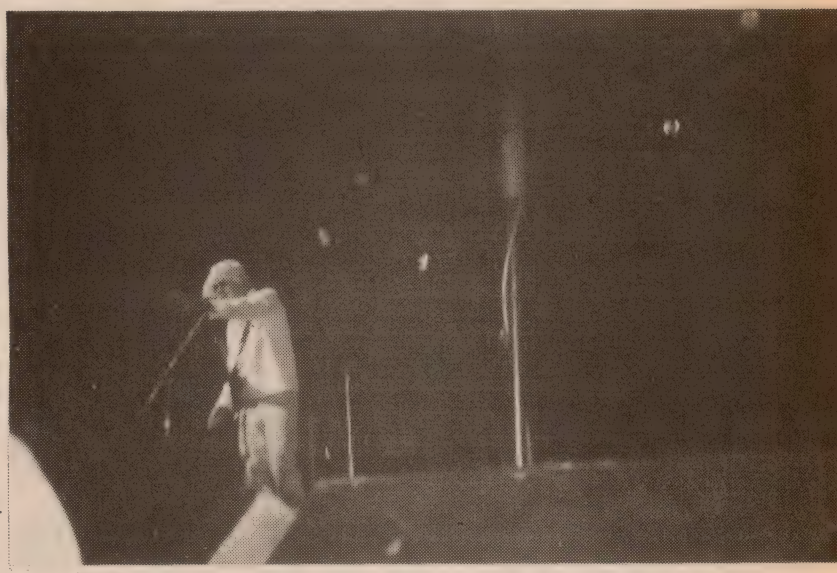
ED KUEPPER (from AUS, Spo-dee-o-dee 7/18/89)

It takes Ed Kuepper, who co-founded The Saints in 1973, 16 years to make it to America, and what happens? His U.S. debut at Maxwells is the same night as the farewell reunion gig of his '76 punk contemporaries, The Damned! Cruel quirk of circumstance, that. Actually, Keupper's music hasn't been "punk" since **THE SAINTS'** 1978 LP Eternally Yours, still most Americans are probably more aware of him through The Saints then his later band **LAUGHING CLOWNS** or his now 4 year solo career. Fortunately, although Kuepper's first ever US tour was a mere 3 dates, 2 of them were here (the other in LA), so there was a 2nd chance to see him at Spo-dee-o-dee (Ever hear Jerry Lee Lewis' version of "Drinking Wine Spo-dee-o-dee?") on 23rd St., the sort of ridiculously lame, spiffy, colorless venue that books new music once a year (at New Music Seminar time - this was the Australia showcase with Sunnyboys, Kuepper, etc.), and then goes back to being an overpriced, sheik, yuppie disco for tourists like it is the other 360 days a year. Kuepper drew a small if enthusiastic crowd, almost entirely made up of heavy drinking Australians, shame he has to come 1/2 way across the world to play for his own countrymen! But Kuepper, who will never be accused of being congenial on stage, nevertheless put on a professional show (too professional for some who are used to loose, rootsy, spontaneous US rock bands, judging from the Maxwells reports). OK, the female backing vocals were a little overdone, and it seems ludicrous to see her sing lead on the waltzing intro part of the only Saints' number, "The Prisoner" (from '78's Prehistoric Sounds; no Laughing Clowns songs though), but the band was skilled enough to allow Ed to be the focus of the show, and he was great! What a guitarist! Thankfully nobody yelled out for his '76 classic "I'm Stranded," but you didn't have to have all of his 9 albums to know he's a master riffsman with a combination punk/blues background! The best two numbers were the opening "Also Sprach The King of Eurodisco" ('87 Rooms of The Magnificent) and the title cut from Ed's 1st solo LP, '85 Electrical Storm, which has the harshest acoustic sound imaginable! Pity he comes here a solid 4 months before his first US LP (3rd Aus) is finally released, Everybody's Got To, even if it had already been out in Aus. for over a year! No one knew the songs, 'cept for the singles, but it's the best solo LP he's made, the first full band sound one he's really pulled off, and it made up the bulk of his set in fine if unfamiliar style. For a strong, obviously thoroughly rehearsed band, strong songs, and Ed's guitar playing (good vocals too), this was a terrific show that sadly almost everyone missed. Hope he comes back now the LP is out, perhaps he'd command the support his long and intriguing back catalog deserves. Please!

ED KUEPPER, EX-SAINTS ('73-'78) GUITARIST + LAUGHING CLOWNS ('79-'85) LEADER, CURRENT SOLO ARTIST, AT NEW YORK'S SPO-DEE-O-DEE, 7/18/89, HIS 2ND EVER U.S. APPEARANCE (3 DAYS AFTER MAXWELLS). (PHOTO JACK RABID)

THE (original) DAMNED (from London, Ritz 7/15/89)
Hell of a way to call it quits! If you're going to go, might as well give people one last thrill. Really strange, but there's **CAPTAIN SENSIBLE** on bass and **BRIAN JAMES** back on guitar, the 1st and most exciting Damned lineup, the same one that first blitzed CGBG (4 nights) and L.A in the Spring of 1977 when punk was a new concept 'round here. Singer **DAVE VANIAN** even adopted a new look for the occasion, forgoing his Dracula getup (as well as the bozo the clown white streaked hairstyle he had on the last two Damned tours here) for a leather jacketed slicked-back greasy haired Elvis Presley persona, something completely different than the half bat/half ghoul old days. Captain Sensible no longer wears Halston dresses either, but he's still in the habit of losing his clothes. For the final song, a trashy cover of the **ROLLING STONES**' "The Last Time" he announced "This is the last time you'll see us, and this is the last time you'll see this!" and sure enough, off came his underwear and 2000 people got a good laugh. Yes, this show was mindless nostalgia. What of it? The screen goes up, the lights flood the stage, and bang, it's "See Her Tonight," with James all but pulling the strings off his guitar he's so into it. A true James Williamson disciple, he's schooled in the high, mighty pummel guitar style, he's getting a thrill to let loose this rapid fire barage of notes after so many years of noodling around with **LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH.** Sensible rolls all over the stage with his bass as if it were a toothpick, like the old days he's the main goofball, and his restless activity makes Vanian and James strut quickly around the stage with him, bumping into each other and bouncing off invisible walls. Perhaps there's a fine or other penalty for standing still? It's great! "Fish" is a knockout, **RAT SCABIES** blowing away his snare rolls into his Keith Moon styled beat/fills on the break. All the 1st album except "She's so Messed Up" & "Born To Kill" comes and goes plus their sped up **BEATLES**' "Help" (b-side "New Rose"), and now James departs. Never thought we'd ever see this lineup and this material ever again, to see 'em pull it off was sensational! It's too much to expect any 2nd LP Music For Pleasure material, since all but James have disowned it, and it was the cause of their first breakup in 1978. **PAUL GREY** of the '80-'82 lineup comes out looking heavy metal like he's still in **UFO,** and assumes the bass so Sensible can take on the guitar. There the loony bird with the beret (Sensible) proceeds to play on his back after falling down. Machine Gun Etiquette standards and Black Album cuts like "Wait For The Blackout" are played (no Strawberries stuff, drat), with the crowd going ape as expected on "Love Song" and "Smash It Up." The first encore Brian James returns so that two guitars can slam into the **MC5**'s "Looking at You" (see Back in The USA) for a solid 8 minutes, then it's "The Last Time" and Sensible's stroll in the buff. And it's over. Until the next time? An event worthy of the anticipation. Just 'cause it's nostalgia doesn't mean the thrill is hollow or cheap. If you missed this tour you missed one of the hottest gigs of the year, very memorable indeed! A much better note to break up on than Anything. To bad they'd never consider staying together! No chance!

DAVE VANIAN (ABOVE), CAPTAIN SENSILE (MIDDLE) OF THE ORIGINAL ('76-'78)DAMNED, AT THE RITZ, 7/15/89 (ALL 3 PHOTOS: JACK RABID)



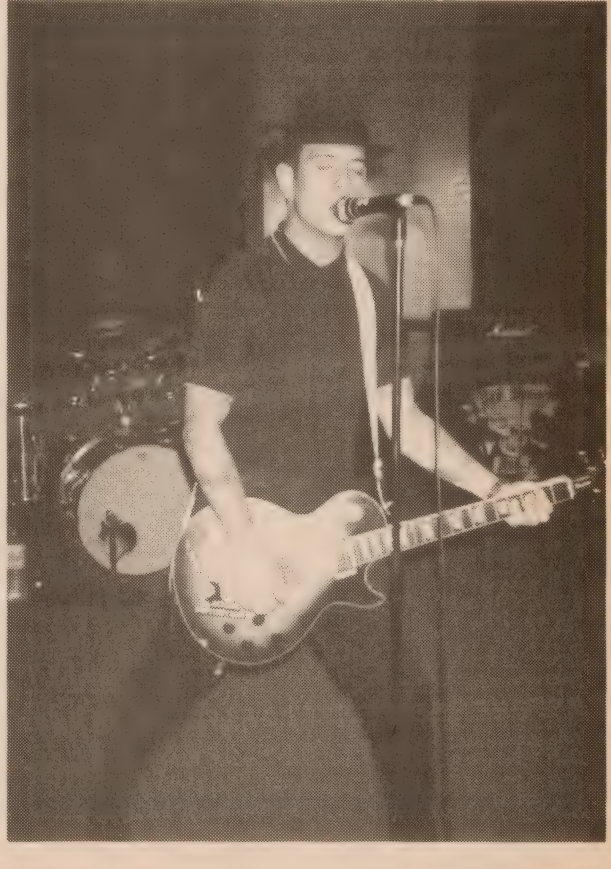
BELOW: VANIAN, SENSIBLE, AND BRIAN JAMES (GUITAR), WITH RAT SCABIES (DRUMS) OPEN WITH "SEE HER TONIGHT." A HUGE THRILL!

R.E.M. (from Athens, GA, Nassau Colisuem Uniondale, NY, 9/20/89 Could REM make the transition from theaters to hockey arenas? If anything, they've made it a lot smoother than they did from clubs to theaters! In fact, this was a far better show

than the OK at best Felt Forum '86 gigs, also better than the good Beacon Theater '84 gig or the '85 Capitol Theater one. It's strange to think the band we once saw at Mudd Club, at Queens College, or at Maxwells opening for The Neats could be so splendid at Nassau Coliseum, but then again, they're the only band we've ever seen that became massively popular without changing their attitudes at all! Watching **MICHAEL STIPE** tell Tim Sommer on Post-Modern MTV that his goal was to "make activism sexy" is sure a far cry from the usual ego-bloated jerk basking in his newfound celebrityhood. At this show, there were tables everywhere set up for Greenpeace, and other environmentalist charities; this alone makes REM "1,000,000" times more useful to society than Def Lepard will ever be! And you don't get the feeling like Sting that it's their cause of the month either. About a third of the way through, suddenly the stage went pitch dark, and a slide show began, a text of the band's greetings, requests for quiet during the slow songs, reminders about the Greenpeace tables, etc, and then the show started again. Supporting their best album since Reckoning (or at least Fables of The Reconstruction), REM were a knockout for the first time since back then. Some of these songs were absolutely outstanding! "Inside Out," one of Green's lesser tracks, was actually the most exciting thing, with an absolutely dangerous groove missing from the studio version, and best of all, Stipe sang out of megaphone for half the song, a robot like effect that made the "I could turn you inside out" choruses absolutely sinister! Whoahh! He turned this trick again during "Orange Crush" behind **MIKE MILLS'** superb backing "Ohhhhhhhh"s, which gave that another dimension. Best of all, a strobe at Stipe's feet illuminated he alone when the stage was dark, making him some kind of poltergeist. The only criticism possible was that everytime they'd build you up with a fast one or two, they'd pull out another quiet ballad. Admittedly, REM obviously cherishes these moments; Stipe sang a few acapella covers, notably an encore of **SYD BARRETT**'s "Dark Globe" (see The Madcap Laughs, 1969 or the new Opel collection version) and a chorus of **THE GANG OF FOUR**'s "We Live as We Dream, Alone" (see Songs of The Free, 1981) as an introduction to the emotional "World Leader Pretend." We can even remember them opening one of the Beacon shows with **THE VELVETS'** "Pale Blue Eyes." Still, there's no harm in setting people up and pushing them over the edge with a dose of hard ones in a row. But there were so many highlights! The encore **TELEVISION** cover of "See No Evil," (opening track on Marquee Moon 1977, does this band have great taste in covers or what?), the surprisingly fireball version of "These Days" (which along with "Inside Out" was the hottest number), a quiet "South Central Rain," a heavy "Feeling Gravity's Pull," a lilting "King of Birds," and harsh, uplifting pullups of "Get Up," "Pop Song '89," "The One I Love," "Exhuming McCarthy" and even "I Remember California." REM seem comfortable at last with the large crowd they play to, and actually seize the responsibilty to get all 17,000 involved (The Garden sold out in a few hours in March, this one had a few thousand empty seats. Why, 'cause of the Stones gigs?). Definately the best platinum band we've seen since the 60's both on record and in concert. Still can't get over how much this band earned the $20 the tickets were.

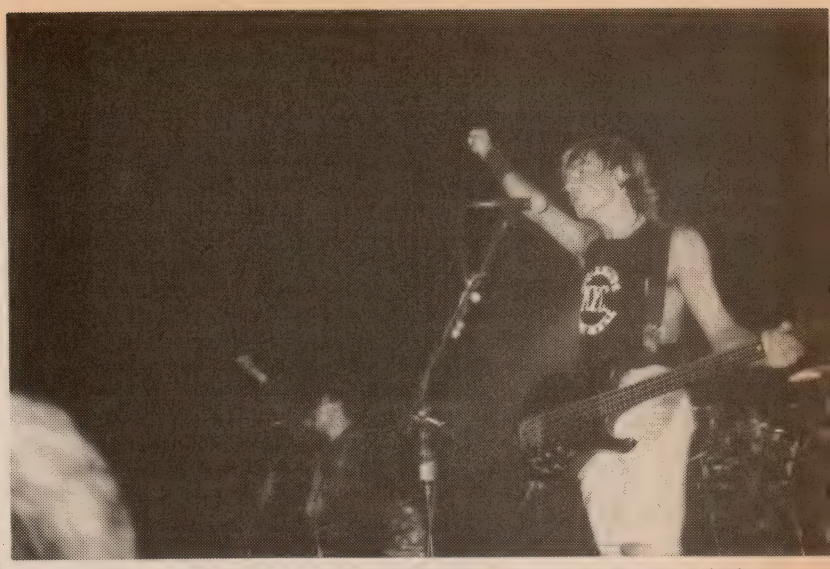
SOCIAL DISTORTION (from L.A., Montana Studios NYC 8/25/89, City Gardens, Trenton, NJ 8/27/89

Montana Studios was a "meet your new artists" showcase for Epic Records, the label that just signed them. If you think it's a shock that CBS would sign Social D. (I do), you have good cause: This sort of party was neccessary 'cause the maority of CBS probably has no idea what it is they signed! Social D. are a smoother act than they were when they were one of the kings of the early 80's So-Cal punk scene, but they have a lot of that in them still, particularly since they still play most of those old songs like "Mommy's Little Monsters," "Another State of Mind," the blistering "1945," "Playpen" and even "Lude Boy" (!!!). They debuted a number of new ones, some of which are really happening (forgive the L.A.speak), especially "So Far Away" (not The Chords) which make me think the upcoming 3rd LP (Epic debut) will nicely mix Mommy's Little Monsters classic punk guitar attack with Prison Bound's more laid back rootsy songs, maybe even a little more pop based this time. If they record these songs anywhere near like they played them live, then it could be the best of the 3 LPs, meaning that their signing had no effect on toning them down! It sure didn't have any effect on the show they played for the label, they were the same as in the past, only less sloppy than at The Ritz in '85 and The World last year. This was the best post **BRENT/DEREK** (an excellent bass/drums combo) Social D gig here ever, the rhythm section has particularly tightened up behind the drumming of (ex-**LEWD**!) **CHRIS.** Sound was pindrop clear too, more bands should play in fancy studios like this! City Gardens show was much the same only longer, with more Prison Bound material, which was nice to hear. Two strong, confident gigs from a band that had mildly disappointed here in the past few years. If CBS doesn't try to make them into LA Guns, this should be a hell of a raw major label act!

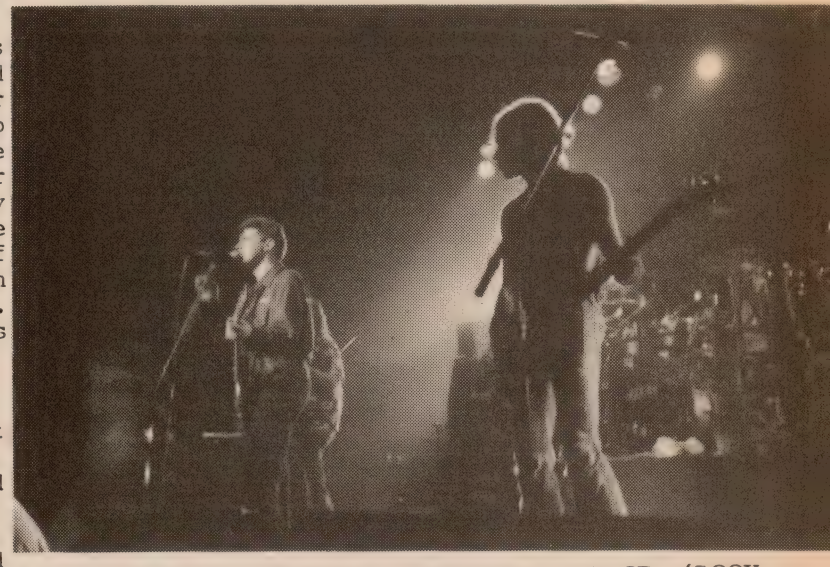


MIKE NESS OF SOCIAL DISTORTION (SEE DRUMMER CHRIS IN BACK?) AT MONTANA STUDIOS SHOWCASE, NEW YORK, 8/25/89 (PHOTO: JACK RABID)

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS (from London, new Ritz 6/23/89)
SLF have been doing reunion tours in Europe for two years now, it's about time they brought their act to the States, if only for four gigs (NY, Boston, LA, SF). This wasn't as nostalgic as some of the other punk reunions of late, since we've been listening to Live and Loud's document of the '87 shows for over a year (and this tour supported the new live album See You Up There, talk about overkill). Besides, it doesn't seem like 7 years since SLF played the (2nd) Peppermint Lounge in support of the excellent Now Then, their last studio LP. Although it was a typically effective hard working, classic punk set from SLF, it was roughly the same as the 2 live LPs, which kind of spoiled the fun. Otherwise, it was a solid show. The first LP stuff was the both the best and most popular; the opening "Alternative Ulster" was a blast and a half; right off those simple chords after the well known intro, the crowd boiled over and the band leaped to the cymbal crashes. "And away we go!" "Suspect Device" and "Wasted Life" had more life than the almost cynical, perfunctionary treatment they often got in the early 80's here. "Tin Soldiers" and "Piccadily Circus" were the biggest numbers of the later albums, both played with true conviction, no smugness. Even the 10 minute **BOB MARLEY** cover seemed topical on this night. With a far better drummer than the **JIM REILLEY** years (ex-**TOM ROBINSON BAND** stickman **DOLPHIN TAYLOR**) and a refreshed attitude, SLF have proved that their comeback is not merely a $$$ cash in, but a group that probably appreciates playing a live gig more than before, one that if possible sweats more for those dollars than most typically half-fast money grabbing comeback types. SLF don't intend to write new material or become a working band again; if it works for them to just play sporadically when the demand is there and feel like it, that's alright. They've still got more goods than most of today's newer bands and they know it.



ABOVE: JAKE BURNS (L) AND ALI MCMORDIE (R) OF THE REUNITED STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, AT RITZ 6/23/89. REAL FISTS IN THE AIR ROCK?



SLF: BURNS, MCMORDIE, DOLPHIN TAYLOR (LOOK BEHIND DRUMS), + HENRY CLUNEY (BEHIND BURNS). SEE INTERVIEW PG. 56.(BOTH PHOTOS:JACK RABID)

KILLING JOKE (from London, Maxwells 8/14/89):
Whopper surprise show of the year! Most bands quit when they no longer have a record company, particularly if they've been around 11 years and have made 7 LPs. Even if they do stick around, they don't go out and play small clubs like CBGB, Maxwells, Cat Club, Green Parrot (Neptune, NJ) and Loop Lounge (Passaic NJ), when they're accustomed to playing the Ritz. KJ earns respect for doing this. Still, there was no reason to expect KJ to be any good. Their last LP Outside The Gate was so bad it was embarrasing. The longtime guts of the band's crunch, drummer **PAUL FERGUSSON** as well as fine bassist **RAVEN** had left before that lame record, and they'd surely be missed live. However, remaining members singer **JAZ COLEMAN** and guitarist **GEORDIE** must have come to their senses, they didn't play a single track from that new LP! They also ignored the lovely 6th LP Brighter Than A Thousand Suns (which many KJ fans disliked 'cause it was nice, sensitive pop with keyboards rather than the old blitzkreig, but it's a great LP), not even "Sanity." Instead they played the enduring first LP like "Wardance," "Requiem," "Psyche" and "Complications" and 5th LP Nighttime (their popular "comeback" LP that's almost as good as the first) "Love Like Blood," "Kings and Queens," "Nighttime," and the most requested number with they closed with "Eighties." Even the three new songs sounded like outtakes from those records! If the choice of material wasn't surprising enough (if anything, it was the same set as their incredible '84 Ritz show that earned them the cover of issue 17), the way they played these songs was the real shock! Opening with "The Fall of Because" (2nd LP, What's This For) at little, crowded (though not sold out) Maxwells, the dense sound came flying off the stage, without a doubt the best sounding band I've ever heard there. They had so much equipment on stage they could barely fit the band, really super amps and effects. We expected them to be incredibly loud as a result, but the sound was so clear that it didn't irritate! Instead it just filled every last space in one's head, it was mesmorizing! Mannnnnnn! Still can't believe it! Geordie must have 40 effects (and 2 seconds of delay) on his guitar, it's like it's coming out of the clouds every time he so much as plucks a chord on his Gretch. New drummer **MARTIN ATKINS** (Mr. **BRIAN BRAIN** and ex-**PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.**) is finally in the right band, he must be a marathon runner in his spare time, how can he bash like that for over an hour (this is no ordinary drummer. He's among the only people who plays with his whole body, his whole

KILLING JOKE'S BUG-EYED JAZ COLEMAN (R) + GEORDIE (L) MAXWELLS 8/14/89. SEE MARTIN ATKINS' HAIR IN THE AIR? PHOTO:JACK RABID

arms, like he's beating someone with his fists, rather than just flicking the wrists like you're supposed to)? Covered with sweat from his constant assault (and steamy Maxwells) you kept wondering how he can hold the sticks with all the perspiration. An absolutely intense visual drummer, certainly the equal musically of Fergusson too, which is something. Then there's Jaz, who's still some kind of wacko. Often compared to Joe Strummer for that bug-eyed leer, his eyes are so wide open it's as if they're thrusting towards you. He still holds his free hand out in front of his face like a preacher exhorting the heavens, and he prowls like a restless back alleycat what little room he had of the stage. He's a serious, serious, serious man, a most commanding presence. He's demented, he's some kind of demon, even in between songs with his almost insane song introductions, which sound as frightening as the music (too bad 'couldn't make 'em out). This was an astounding concert, both in sight and especially sound. If you don't believe this, that's understandable, I wouldn't have either. **NOTE:** Band kept crowd waiting for hours. Not nice.

FOR AGAINST (from Lincoln, NE, new Tramps 7/16/89)

What should have been a triumphant show by one of the U.S.'s 5 best (if not the best) bands, turned out to be a very ordinary gig. For Against played two astounding shows at CBGB and Maxwells in the summer of 1987 for a handful of people; now they come and there's a good 50-60 people there who obviously love their records, but it's too late. The incredible band which soared the commonplace as late as last year's sensational Pittsburg outdoor New Music Festival appearance is sadly no more. 2/3 of that incomparable trio have split for a new band; Guitarist **HENRY DINGMAN** and drummer **GREG HILL** are now in a new band **THE MILLIONS.** That leaves singer/bassist and main songwriter **JEFFREY RUNNINGS** as the lone survivor, and even he's switched to guitar now! Effectively, only the voice remains, and though there's much to love about his singing, clearly it was the sound of the three exceptional players that made this band work. So we've got nothing left, drat! Furthermore, though Runnings is to be commended for picking up a new bass and drums and sticking it out, this was only their 2nd gig since they reformed, and they've a couple of years to go before they can re-reach the level the older band did after 5 years and 2 albums. Perhaps it wasn't time to come to New York and play the seminar yet for those just picking up on '88's hands down best LP December. If, however, we judge the new band completely on it's own, there's much potential. The two new people are still shy, they need the confidence of a few years of performing, and they had trouble with the rented equipment as well. And Runnings, though he has a nice, floating guitar sound, needs to do more with it to adequately replace a genius like Dingman. But the music was truly nice, and it was a enjoyable show. They played all new material written since the lineup changes, which was smart if disappointing to the new fans who'd turned up at this awful, spotless, lifeless venue that should never host a rock band with any balls (perhaps they should stick to their more customary blues). The only thing that was familiar was a completely reworked "Forget Who You Are" from the good if overshadowed by December 1st LP '87's Echelons. This band needs time, you can bet with a large dose of that they will return to form, they're already pretty good right off the starting gun. Nice songs especially. **NOTE:** Millions' demos are also pretty good though the vocals take getting used to, and Runnings' songwriting abilities are largely missed. They too are improving with age and bear watching.

NAKED RAYGUN (from Chicago, Rapp Arts Center 7/17, Cat Club 8/8, Maxwells 8/12)

Rapp Arts Center was New Music Seminar. It was also the last ever show with guitarist **JOHN HAGGERTY**, who'd already told the rest of the band he was quitting. No one else knew though! The other three members were still quietly hoping he would change his mind, but he didn't. Very bittersweet gig, it was the best NR show NY has ever seen, after, how many, two dozen worth? Haggerty, who usually was found hanging out on stage right, cigarette

THE NEW VERSION OF FOR AGAINST, SEMINAR SHOWCASE, TRAMPS 7/16/89. JEFF RUNNINGS HAS MOVED TO GUITAR! PHOTO: JACK RABID

drooping from the mouth, was <u>really</u> into it, he and the others were obviously inspired by this farewell performance. Midway through singer **JEFF PEZZATI** picked up his old guitar and the evening's two best numbers ensued, "The Peacemaker," as provacactively horrified as those 3rd grade basement spookhouses your older neighbor (mine: David Raiger) was always putting on, into the new single "Treason," with it's steely edge and burning chorus. These tracks were fantastic, too bad Pezzati doesn't play more! "Which Side You're On," "Home of The Brave," "Rat Patrol," "Vanilla Blue" etc. all had extra mustard on them, and the crowd went b-zerk when **THE BUZZCOCKS'** "Ever Fallen in Love" was the encore. Bassist **PIERRE KEZDY** arched backward and flailed his right arm like a guitar player as drummer **ERIC SPICER** showed once again he can imitate Buzzcocks' extraordinary **JOHN MAHER** better than anyone alive. The crowd didn't know why it was such an emotional show, but it picked up on the overwhelming spirit anyway. It's fortunate that Haggerty made his exit in front of large crowd in a big hall, the best Irving Plaza sized venue NY has had since the first Peppermint Lounge. 23 days later NR returned, having auditioned and found a replacement, former **PRODUCT 19** guitarist **BILL STEVENS.** Stevens is some kind of wonder. He must have been a super fan, or he's got an exceptional ear, 'cause he picked up the whole 20-25 song set in such a short time. No mistakes were noticeable at either Cat Club or Maxwells. In fact, those who weren't in the know and don't follow the players were certainly unaware that any personnel change had occured! (No announcement was made at any of these shows) NR lost a step in tightness, but way less than was reasonable to expect. As time passes and with proper rehearsal, even that small gap will close; the only question remaining is the impact on songwriting Haggerty's exit will have. All of NR write, but that's one less contributor, unless Stevens can pick up the slack. Add three more hot shows to NR's NY history. See interview for more.

UNUSED SPACE! HOW COULD THIS BE! WHOSE FAULT IS THIS! EXECUTE THEM IMMEDIATELY!

THE KEZDY BROTHERS: THE EFFIGIES' JOHN (L) AND NAKED RAYGUN'S PIERRE (R), 3 AM, E. 4TH ST., NYC, AFTER NAKED RAYGUN'S SET AT RAPP ARTS CENTER. FAMILY PHOTO: JACK RABID

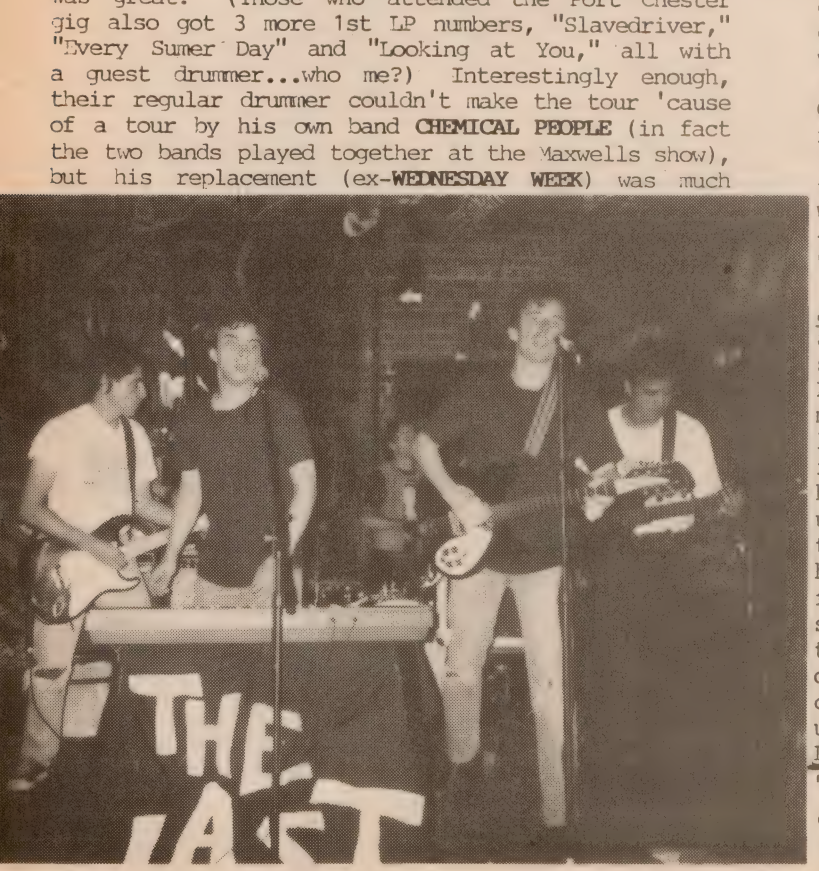
<u>NEW MODEL ARMY</u> <u>(from Bradford, UK, CBGB 6/11/89)</u>

For a band that was one of the first to be refused US visas under the stricter interpretation of the Immigration Law, New Model Army sure come over regularly now! Guess the State Department changed their mind about NMA's "lack of artistic merit." More likely, once you get a visa the first time you're home free. This tour supported <u>Thunder and Consolation</u>, and though the previous three albums were all better, there's still enough good songs on the new one. Besides, NMA hit all of their previous records liberally. Drummer **ROB** is a hellish brute, whose skill and strength make up the band's heavy sound. Singer/guitarist **JUSTIN** (aka **SLADE**) has just the right assortment of faces for each selection, screwing his gruff visage into the appropriate convulsions on the more angry or anthemic numbers like "51st State of America" and "Stupid

NEW MODEL ARMY's JUSTIN (SLADE) (L) AND ROB (R) AT CBGB 6/11/89 PHOTOS:SANDY FRIEDLAND

Questions," and managing more tender expressions on the more sympathetic numbers. In fact, the most intense song of the set came on the quietest moment; "The Ballad," an almost unnoticed track buried at the end of side 2 of The Ghost of Cain, came out so spooky and pent up, it almost sounded more enraged than soothing. It's NMA's insistence on variety in sentiments (political and personal), sound and material that has made them popular. The equal lack of compromise in their live attack has helped build a small following as well. They won't win any beauty contests (in England the critics call them "grebos"), but they've never failed to impress with their attitude and smarts. **NOTE1:** It was nice to see NMA try out CBGBs with its great sound system, but it's unlikely they'll play it again. Apparently, they even considered cancelling this 2nd of 2 nights (glad they didn't!), citing numerous disagreements with management, plus disenchantment with CBGB's policy of booking 5 or 6 bands a night, even on this, a Sunday (no room for all the equipment). Still, how many other small clubs are there in this city, particularly with good PA's? No side taken here. **NOTE2:** Unlike most UK groups, NMA allowed the support bands to use the drum riser. They get a few points for this thoughtfulness.

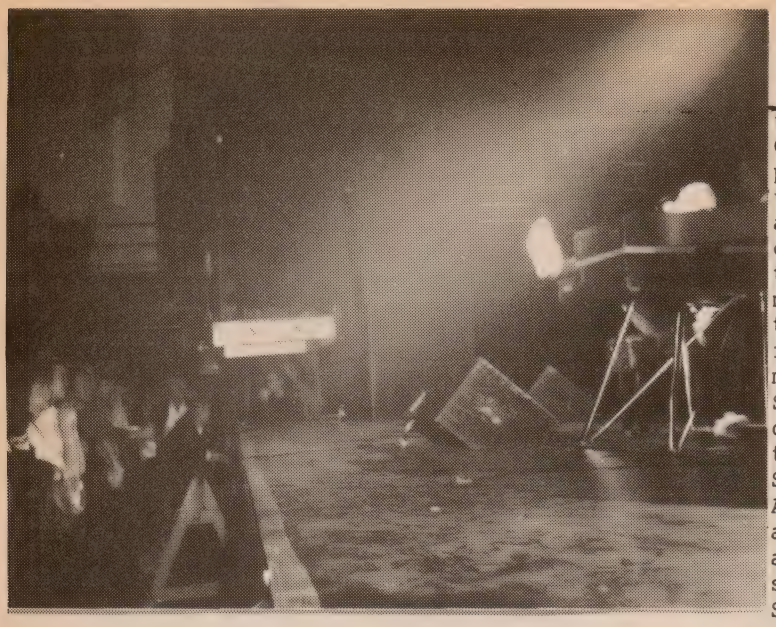
THE LAST (from L.A., Pyramid 8/15/89, The Beat, Port Chester, NY 8/16/89, Maxwells 8/17/89, Knitting Factory 8/19/89) For a band that didn't make it to New York (or anywhere else for that matter, save for one San Diego gig) until their 12th year of existence, they've now played here 6 times in 13 months! These four shows mixed material from their new SST LPs, last year's Confession and the brand new Awakening well, with the best cuts from both. Still not many cuts from '79's L.A. Explosion, '80's unreleased Look Again or '83's Painting Smiles on a Dead Man, just the set ending "She Don't Know Why She's Here" (still their alltime classic), which was great! (Those who attended the Port Chester gig also got 3 more 1st LP numbers, "Slavedriver," "Every Sumer Day" and "Looking at You," all with a guest drummer...who me?) Interestingly enough, their regular drummer couldn't make the tour 'cause of a tour by his own band **CHEMICAL PEOPLE** (in fact the two bands played together at the Maxwells show), but his replacement (ex-**WEDNESDAY WEEK**) was much better, a much more nimble beat than the regular guy, so these shows were even better than last year's seminar gigs (that's also why they couldn't play more old stuff, hadn't taught the new guy anything but the modern set). Again, it seems like **JOE NOLTE** wants to break every last string on his 12 string Rickenbacker they way he slashes at it like a cat with a string. An obvious punk rocker who's been "trapped" in a mildly psychedelic pop group all these years; you should hear the loud version of **THE WHO**'s "Substitute," done half way between the original and the **SEX PISTOLS'** version. Joe was even windmilling like **PETE TOWNSEND**, ha ha. We also got "She Loves You" and "Baby It's You," but it was the originals that did the best damage, "Garden Grows" furious snare drum 16th notes pounded out the chord changes. **MIKE NOLTE** took the lead and shook off a faulty keyboard amp on "Another Day," and Joe sang the intro wothout a mic at the top of his lungs on "Going Gone." "So Quick to Say" opened like a screamer and never let up. Four smokin' if sparcely attended (don't miss 'em next time) gigs, from rags to riches. Never get tired of 'em. Glad to see 'em touring regularly!



THE LAST AT THE BEAT, PORTCHESTER, NY 8/16/89. BROTHERS MIKE (L) & JOE NOLTE (R) IN FOREGROUND. PHOTO: JACK RABID

FUGAZI (from D.C., Columbia U. 10/9)
Not the red hot gig we saw at Maxwells April 9. The heat, intimacy and rapt attention of the Maxwells crowd brought out the best in physical Fugazi, they were being spurred on. There were a large number of people flipping out at Columbia too, but the atmosphere wasn't as charged. However, Fugazi can be counted on for an animal performance, their usual variety of punk, reggae, ska, metal, and funk set to shirtless bodies twisting, contorting and jerking. Fugazi's live appeal is their constant motion, musically they could use some more variation of sound to complement their obvious love of changing speed and styles. No one will ever accuse Fugazi of just playing the same song over and over in redundant fashion; but though they posess a sense of dynamics (they're fond of bringing the volume down before another quick crashing buildup), it would be interesting to see them vary their band sound with all the different feels they play. Otherwise, they played most of both their EPs, and really ignited the crowd on bashing versions of "Margin Walker" and "Suggestion" (again - This seems to be the most emotional song of their live sets). When whipped into this kind of angry frenzy as befits their former hardcore associations, Fugazi define "uncompromising:" this is the spirit of their show.

JERRY LEE LEWIS (Ritz, 10/7/89)
Something of a let down in comparison to his rockin' sets at the little Lone Star Cafe the last few years. For the first time, Jerry Lee looked as tired as most people his age do, particularly if they've led the non-stop life he has! Actually he blamed it on staying up late and drinking the night before, but still, for a good part of this set, he uncharacteristically sat still, calmly playing the piano and singing, fair enough (because Lewis has such a great voice), but still we were waiting for the man on fire to unleash his pumping piano sound. Worse, a good 1/3 - 1/2 of the set was songs that were never finished. He'd play a good portion of them and then wave his band to stop, so they could play something else. This was particularly unsettling when **RAY CHARLES'** "What'd I Say," which Lewis has always done a hair-raising version of



JERRY LEE LEWIS, KICKS HIS RIGHT LEG FOR "GREAT BALLS OF FIRE," RITZ 10/7/89 THE AUDIENCE IS AWED PHOTO: JACK RABID

(consult not only the Sun studio version, but the monstrous live version on the greatest live album ever made, Jerry Lee Lewis Live at The Star Club, Hamburg 1964) came abruptly to a halt before the repeating "Tell me what'd I say" hammering ending. "Mexicali Rose" swung nicely, and the crowd ate up Lewis' antics, playing 20 seconds of "Big Legged Woman," then laughing at how you can't get away with such a raunchy song 33 years later! (people are a lot more sensitive about perceived sexism these days) Lewis had something going with these two amorous females front center who kept yelling for him to come over there, prompting Jerry Lee to respond bemusedly "I heard that!" Somebody yelled out for his first ever single "Crazy Arms" so he played 40 seconds of that. He did all of **HANK WILLIAMS'** "I'm So Lonesome I Could Die," with a country voice that's sung so sweetly for so long. The show thus meandered along, no one demanding much from the man whose talent is as large as his legend, but he started to snap out of it as the show progressed. Gradually the old steam started to filter back into his arms and legs, he began to play the piano again as if it were a demon he'd mastered, his legs started to kick out, and his voice got thicker. Some magic memory potion was putting a spell on him. By the time he got to the closing moments where we got what we all came to see, "Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On' into "Great Balls of Fire," he was fully back to that hurricane gale force he'd been at Lone Star and at Yankee Stadium with Fats Domino. THE KILLER had reassumed his identity, the piano bench finally took its customary flight, he pounded the keys like no other has before or since, and he just let fly. Yeah it was only 5 minutes. 5 minutes of paradise! That can make a lot of believers and a lot of repeat customers. A giant, as sure as there are any.

CARL PERKINS (from Memphis, TN, Bottom Line, 5/9/89)
Much the same show as last year's snappin' Lone Star gig. It's still hard to reason how Carl could leave his two sons off his new Born to Rock LP. He's been playing with them so long one would expect them to be included in the studio regardless of their familial relation, and besides rhythm section **GREG** and **STAN** are almost as talented as their popular pop. Besides, he's so proud of them, introducing them by telling stories about their respective births and giving the audience a laugh. Thus, one must catch Perkins on stage to hear the better cuts on the new LP (OK as it is) really come to life to match his old 50's chestnuts. "Charlene" and "Born to Rock" in particular sound quite comforatable fitting into a set with such formidable Perkins' material like "Matchbox," "Honey Don't," "Blue Suede Shoes" and "Put Your Cat Clothes On," rockabilly classics all. Also jumpin' was his selction from the Perkins/**ROY ORBISON/JOHNNY CASH/JERRY LEE LEWIS** Sun roster reunion album, whose title escapes me. As mentioned last time, few seem to sincerely appreciate the privledge of performing for such a respectful and happy audience as Perkins; the sight of him standing outside his tour bus on Mercer Street for an hour after the show in a cool, damp (if not unpleasant) mist, greeting an orderly line of fans and well wishers was a warming picture. Fortunately we attended the first show, so we missed the hoopla around **ERIC CLAPTON** joining Perkins on stage in the nightcap. Actually, Clapton playing on the old Sun hits was probably pretty good, assuming he reverted to his old blues **YARDBIRDS** form circa the '63 live recordings with **SONNY BOY WILLIAMSON.** But, after so many Michelob commercials, he's something of a tired face to these eyes! White haired, unbelievably humble Perkins gives one the impression that he'd like to give every member of the audience a hug to match his big frame. When you see a guy this good, with this downhome talent, one of the select handful who gave us rock 'n' roll, it makes you feel like our modern rock icons are twice the diaper wetting ego brats that they already are (not mentioning any names Axyl Rose). And yes, he still says "35 years in the business and loving every minute of it." How can you argue with that, particularly from a man of such character and sincerity? **NOTE1:** Perkins came back and played NY again at China Club on 10/7/89. Unfortunately he played up against old label mate Jerry Lee Lewis at the Ritz, which makes no sense! Too bad! **NOTE2:** Perkins dedicated a song to his old friend and soul-mate Orbison, which was touching and sad.

CARL PERKINS, WITH SONS GREG & STAN (BASS + DRUMS),BOTTOM LINE 5/9/89 (PHOTO:JACK RABID)

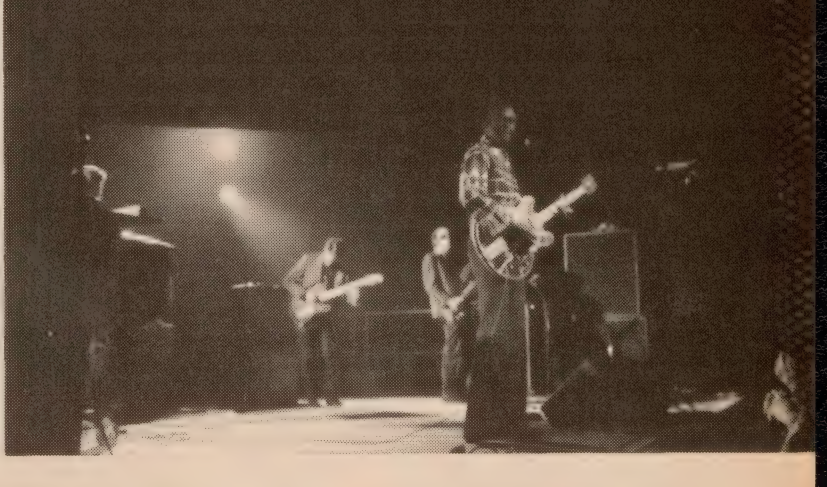
BO DIDDLEY PACKS 'EM IN TO HIS FREE CONCERT IN CENTRAL PARK, 9/2/89 (PHOTO:JACK RABID)

BO DIDDLEY (Central Park Banshell, 9/2):
Mobbed! Where did all these Bo fans come from, or do people just love a free show? A couple of thousand turned out on a sunny Labor Day weekend afternoon, the first bandshell gig in memory so packed one couldn't get into the bench area...it took twenty minutes to find any place where Bo could be viewed from! Unlike his dead boring appearance at US Blues (later the recently closed Downtown) November 4, (see Richard Katz review in issue 25) this time Diddley had a well rehearsed band and a huge crowd to play for. Good to see him rediscover the form that made him famous in the late 50's, so well displayed supporting **THE CLASH** on their first U.S. tour back in February 1979 (here at the Palladium). Bo has a bad tendency to transform his old hits into boogie jams; the wild shuffle beat he pioneered and popularized is often forsaken for a quasi-funk groove that doesn't fit the songs as well. Still, with a tight band, and a set that mixed greatest hits with obscuros (no "Pills," but of course "Who Do You Love" and "Hey Bo Diddley" which he ended with), he was an enlivened performer/singer. He gets the weirdest sound out of that guitar of his too, you know, the one that looks like a giant cigar box with a neck sticking out. He was working up a sweat too, he even took off his hat! Really! Bo's a showman, he entertained the assembled mass, but the strangest thing was the antidrug speech he did at the end of the encore. Said **JIMI HENDRIX** and **JANIS JOPLIN** told him they had things under control. When one thinks of Hendrix's massive talent, you have to stop and think....Anyway, like I said, a fine show on a fine day. Outdoor shows are the best! Hey Bo Diddley!

CHUCK BERRY (from St. Louis, new Ritz 5/6/89)
Much better than expected. Yes, Berry has been a pretty awful live act for a couple of decades, because of his strange policy of just showing up at his gigs a few moments before showtime, and gigging with whatever lousy pickup band the promoter happens to provide for him (the introduction to Berry's autobiography was even penned by **BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN**, whose band performed such backing duties once, before they themselves became famous). Berry is both a pioneer originator and one of the greatest songwriters of all time (just look what he did to the 60's! No one was more covered than Berry. Including BBC Sessions, just one of his songs, "Too Much Monkey Business," was recorded by all of the 5 best bands of the 60's, **KINKS, BEATLES, STONES, WHO** and **HOLLIES**), but even the greatest need decent support players to sound good, and a few bad experiences will make even the most reverent fan think twice. Fortunately, this gig Berry was backed (as advertised) by the **UPTOWN HORNS**, a talented, established band in their own right, perfectly capable of giving this greatest hits set like "Reeling and Rocking" or "Sweet Little Sixteen" (stolen by **BEACH BOYS** for "Surfin' USA"), and "Johnny B. Goode" the kick they both had originally and require. Berry is still a bit of a lazy performer, who thinks of himself more as a pleasing showman rather than a cranking man with a wild way with a simple riff. He soaks up the inevitable cheers like he has 'em coming, rather than he just earned him, but that's pardonable (if not likeable) since more than most anyone he has. I.E., he borders on smug, but he knows how to rock 'n' roll as much as he ever did, particularly kicked in the backside by some competing groove from the Horns, and he knows how to put on a show, with his assortment of famous moves, duckwalks, etc. As this is the 2nd time he's done the Ritz with the Horns, let's hope it's a continuing trend from a living legend.

29 **ENGLAND!** (May 13-May 29, 1989)
My favorite vacation spot, in fact, it was on a train from Sheffield to Manchester that I decided to quit my crummy job. You get one look at the moors there, so beautiful and green and unoccupied, and you realize there's better things in life!
GODFATHERS, CLAYTOWN TROUPE and **THE PRUDES** at Town and Country Club, Kentish Town, North London, 5/15/89: The Town and Country in Kentish Town (as opposed to the other, smaller one in Islington) is like London's Ritz, big, glitzy, and able to

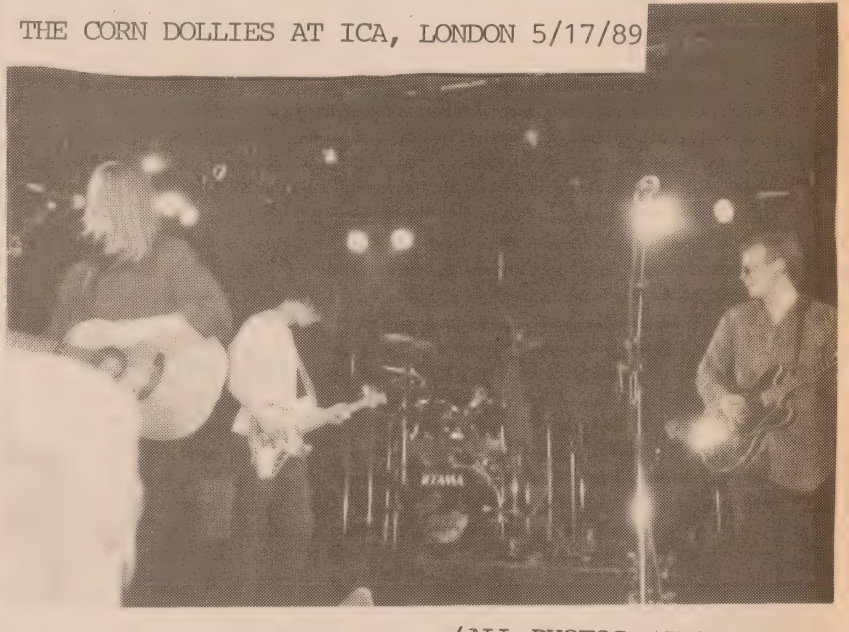
DOES CHUCK BERRY LIKE TO HAVE HIS PHOTO TAKEN? RITZ, 5/6/89: LOOKS LIKE IT. (PHOTO:JACK RABID)



accommodate a thousand or two easily. Overhanging balcony is alright. Sounds great if you're in the middle of the floor or closer to the stage, but a bit muddy everywhere else. Prudes opened the show and were flat out great. They're a new band who'd just released their first single (they've since signed to the Imaginary label, funny enough, one of the best UK indies), and most of the crowd didn't know them (me included), but they have great songs and a terrific guitar sound. Good looking Ian Mac style front man which helps too, surprised they haven't been signed yet. This is a band that could catch fire! Their single does them no justice, hopefully they'll get it right in the studio next time. Claytown Troupe turned out to be boring heavy metal rock with all the leather and cliches (the dry ice opening accomplished nothing but to make us cough a lot. About as fun as a bout of bronchitis). Couldn't move to the back where they sell the t-shirts fast enough! Hmmmm. They sell candy bars in this place! Cadburys are a lot more interesting than Claytown Troupe. Godfathers we've seen in US enough. One or two songs, we fled into the night. This band gets worse each year, another which started with promise only to fall on their fat faces. ■ **MCCARTHY** at Dingwalls, Camden, North London, 5/16/89: Stone Roses were sold out at ICA on the mall in Westminster, so it's off to Camden to check out Socialist pop rockers McCarthy. Their records, though never extraordinary, were always listenable and sometimes had a little something, but live they've got nothing. The singer is a pretty interesting looking guy, in the close cropped Howard Devoto meets Barry Adamson sort of look, and you can tell he cares about his politics, which, it seems, is the best part of McCarthy's set. Also, unlike many left wingers, they seemed happy and informally conversed with the crowd, no over seriousness here. Trouble is, they're boring, try as one might to like them for all they stand for. They can play, they have a decent sound, but their material is redundant and doesn't hold up to the greater demands of an assemblage in a small club. Aside from the vocalist (maybe), there's nothing to watch except the other guitarist's wild paisely shirt. Like a lot of English pop, they're just too cool, too unimpressed, too in style to really give us something, as if they're very presence was enough. They've got to work harder. ■ **CORN DOLLIES, OGDENS** at ICA Festival, The Mall, Westminster, Central London 5/17/89: Got to the Borderline Club on Charing cross Road only to discover **ED KUEPPER** had canceled Drat! Not knowing we'd see him in New York 2 months later, we went cursing off into the night to ICA. The less heralded Ogdens stole the show from the headlining Corn Dollies, who came across as a replay of McCarthy only without even the latter's somewhat redeeming politics and comfort on stage. Not particularly tight, uninteresting run-of-the-mill UK jangle pop, with no drive, no sus, no nothing. Some cuts would rise above momentarily but even these bear no closer scrutiny. Bar time, you can't beat pints of English lager. No trouble stumbling onto the Embankment tube at 12:10 either! Ogden's signer/guitarist looked a bit the local folkie, with his wiry frame and almost too careful way with his instrument. But what he had which so many of these bands like Corn Dollies and McCarthy lack was a real earnestness about him, a feeling that he was really trying to put something across, a desire to make his music matter more than a set of constructed chords performed as per rehearsal. Sure enough, it made his almost average songs sound so much better, he made the "Show me"

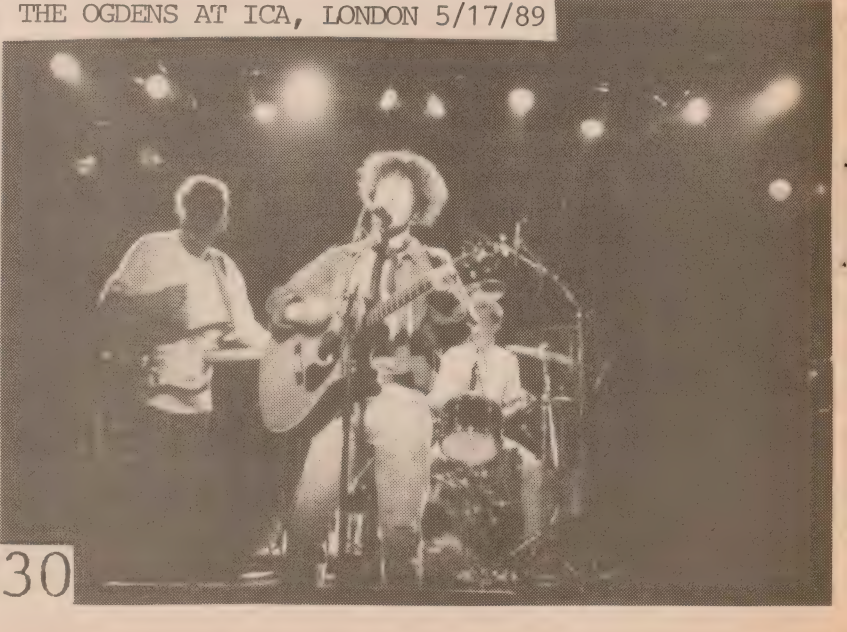
MCCARTHY AT DINGWALLS, LONDON, 5/16/89

THE CORN DOLLIES AT ICA, LONDON 5/17/89



(ALL PHOTOS: JACK RABID)

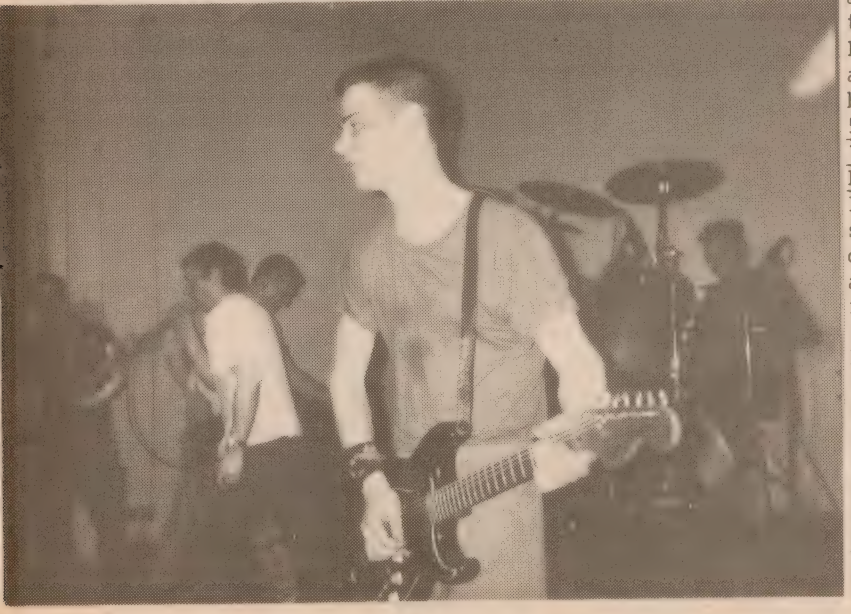
THE OGDENS AT ICA, LONDON 5/17/89



types who buy a week pass for this festival each time it comes around sit up and pay attention, and ultimately get into his band and set. They played but a short time, and casually ambled into the crowd when it was done, but there was no mistaking the connection was made there. At last! ■**NAKED RAYGUN, SENSELESS THINGS, BOMB DISNEYLAND** at The University of London School of African and Oriental Studies, Bloomsbury, Central London, 5/19/89: Punk night in London. The school was like a typical American University Student Union, very modern and very lounge like, with a little meeting hall like place off to the side where the bands actually played. Every variety of punk was there too, your skinheads, your stagasaurases (the guys with all the armor on their wrists and leather jackets), your Sid Vicious types, your jeans and t-shirt skate-punks, not many straight looking ex-punks like me. Makes you feel as out of place as a drug dealer at the opera. At any case, most of them were filling the side lounges, looking as if they'd taken over the place in a raid while **BOMB DISNEYLAND** were playing. Great name, but we've heard this '77 punk stuff before, and better played. They'll improve into something more interesting, though. Senseless Things were much better, but had to cut their set to like 15 minutes 'cause one of them suddenly got ill, and apparently went back to the corridor behind the stage and threw up all over the place. Can't say I saw it, but it sounds plausible, since the audience was into them and was expecting a lot more! Pretty good, they were even covering a lot of U.S. bands, I heard something off **DESCENDANTS'** 1st LP, forgot what it was, I think "Hope." It sure is weird seeing Naked Raygun in London, but it seems UK punk is looking our way these days, N.R. went over big, and most of the kids seemed to know the songs. Everybody was crashing into each other and having a great time, and I wondered if the stage would collapse as it had two weeks prior when **MUDHONEY** made the mistake of inviting the crowd onto the stage with them at the same venue. Guess the punk kids get off the stage faster (head first). At the end of N.R.'s set, they came back for their encores with then former, now current **BUZZCOCKS'** guitarist **STEVE DIGGLE** in tow. Not too hard to figure out what song they'd choose, since we've seen 'em do it in America, and shore 'nuff, it's "Harmony in my Head."

NAKED RAYGUN AT UNIVERSITY OF LONDON SCHOOL OF AFRICAN AND ORIENTAL STUDIES 5/19/89. L-R: JOHN HAGGERTY, JEFF PEZZATI, PIERRE KEZDY. DIGGLE CAME OUT FOR ENCORES TO SING "HARMONY IN MY HEAD" AND "EVER FALLEN IN LOVE." SEE INTERVIEW PAGE 63 FOR DISCUSSION OF THIS. (PHOTO: JACK RABID)

BUZZCOCKS' STEVE DIGGLE JOINS NAKED RAYGUN ON STAGE AT UNIVERSITY OF LONDON 5/19/89 (PHOTO: JACK RABID)



with a guitarless (**PEZZATI** was on 2nd guitar) Diggle jumping all over the stage, mildly drunk and enjoying the hell out of himself, as the crowd both went crazy (1/2) and stood around not knowing what to make of all this (other 1/2). N.R., having met their hero and getting a chance to play with him had the kind of expressions on their faces most of us only have at 5 in the morning when in our nocturnal plays someone tells us we're about to sleep with Michelle Phieffer or something. They looked like you could cut their legs off with a hacksaw and they wouldn't even notice. This was exciting. A 2nd encore of "Ever Fallen in Love" was not as good, mostly since Diggle doesn't sing that song in Buzzcocks and had trouble getting the words right or completely in tune, but by then the whole thing was such a combination of hilarity and amusement it didn't matter. Seriously glad to be there. Oddly enough, that same night one town over **PETE SHELLEY** was making one of his rare live appearances playing a song at the **JOHNNY CASH** tribute benefit night. ■**MEGA CITY 4** at Fulham Greyhound, 5/20/89: (see large review below) ■**LUCINDA WILLIAMS, 13 FRIGHTENED GIRLS** at Bloomsbury Theater, Bloomsbury, London 5/21/89: Nicest theater for shows I've ever seen, as spiffy, clean, modern, and spotless as imaginable, like a tiny Carnegie Hall or something. Bands set up in front of scenery and props for a play that was still going on, very novel. 2nd straight night watching Americans play in London. I counted some 40 of them playing in England the two weeks I was there, even REM was touring then. England is suddenly US mad after a decade and more of thumbing their ignorant noses at us. Now they do the opposite, building up a lot of our more marginal acts as being some kind of rock saviors, but that's the British Press isn't it? 13 Frightened Girls is actually one woman, Big Takeover staff person **SUMISHTA BRAHM**, so obviously I can't say much more about her set than I can about Springhouse gigs, except that I liked

it. Again, if you don't know, she's more or less a folk act, with keyboards instead of her big acoustic on 1/3 of the songs. Nice to see her do so well and earn an encore from the large theater crowd. Lucinda on the other hand has a great voice but nothing to do with it. Aside from "Passionate Kisses" her material is largely standard country, not particularly inspiring, and worse, her band is so routinely, calmly professional as to be recommended by 9 out of 10 doctors for those occasional sleepless nights. Just don't see what the big deal is. Crowd ate her up though. ■ **THE STONE ROSES, THE PRUDES** at Dingwalls, 5/22/89: Stone Roses are reviewed below, an amazing live group. Lucky us, we get to se the Prudes again, and they were as dynamite as at the Town and Country. Very inspired double bill; if Prudes have a long way to go before they're as good as Stone Roses, so does everyone else, they were great again. Perfect appetizer before the feast. ■ **THE LEARNING PROCESS** at The Boardwalk, Manchester 5/24/89: Good Manchester band that's sadly no longer with us. Had a hell of a time overcoming dead Manchester club with the place 4/5 empty. It's terrible, but everyone just sat at the tables in the back a mile away from the band, these English can be so blase, it's pathetic. Why go if you're going to take so little part in a show? Can't figure it out. Boring night on the town, but it wasn't the band's fault. Actually, they didn't have the best songs, but they had a great frontman in **DERMIT**, tall, lanky, dark haired, emotive and good humored, the kind of singer you want to meet after the show 'cause he looks like he might be a real interesting, salt of the earth type. Since they're gone, and their record is hard to come by here, I'll tell you no more. ■ **THE SHAMEN, INSPIRAL CARPETS** at ULU (University of London Union), Bloomsbury, Central London 5/26/89: Very tired after a long train ride from Manchester and still thinking about a great day in Liverpool, but this was worth turning out for. Inspiral Carpets opened, they were both exciting and disappointing at the same time. The thrill is in their electric pulse, the rush of each song that has made them one of the coming bands on the indie scene, young, cocky energetic and loud. Their thick, fast pop is as catchy as a Star Trek Tractor Beam, and exhilarating as all such bands should and can be when they smoke like this. Sadly though, they've got to ax that keyboard player or get him to fiddle with his buttons a little more, this Doors/early Stranglers sound with one note playing gets as tiresome as can be before the set is even half over, and it makes varied material sound too close together. What a loss, where's the imagination? Singer is sharp with much presence, but what's the point of singing half the set facing sideways, the audience isn't backstage! Neither is the rest of the band. It looks and feels awkward. Too bad. Shamen on the other hand were a terrific surprise! Usually when a 60's inspired psychedelic guitar band throws out half their members and buys a beat box drum machine the results are sickening, but not tonight. First off, that pencil-necked nut with the glasses who fronts them is a ping pong ball, always bouncing around the stage in a furious hurry with his guitar during the numerous vocal breaks, and during the vocals as well. How he can keep from singing instead of panting I don't know. Bass guitar does the same, these guys think they're punks, one of the best visual bands of the year. Oh, they had the films too, slides for every song attacking the Thatcher Government and more often the stupid Fleet St. Newspapers, they must have

THE PRUDES OPEN FOR STONE ROSES, AT DINGWALLS, LONDON 5/22/89. GOOD NEW BAND! (PHOTO: JACK RABID)

flashed the cover to about 30 different days worth of The Sun, which makes NY Post look like NY Times. Musically, they haven't lost their pop sense or loud, ringing, psychedelic guitar sound either, and they use the beat box like Big Black used to, as a destructobeat rather than just a time keeper. Terrific! Sensational! Trouble is, we hear they've changed themselves again and now they're acid house! Now if that isn't a sure way to ruin even the best of bands, I can't think what is. ■ **NIGEL AND THE CROSSES** at Borderline, 5/28/89: Nigel and The Crosses is **PETE BUCK** of **REM** and **ROBYN HITCHCOCK**, and this was my last night in England, but the gig was announced while I was in Manchester, and sold out almost immediately before I could get tickets. Tough luck. ■ Now I have to go back to New York. Do you think if I just stayed anyone would notice?

TV SMITH's CHEAP, BLYTHE POWER, ATTILLA THE STOCKBROKER at Harlow Square Club, Harlow, 5/27/89: Back to Harlow again, home of **THE NEUROTICS** (actually Neurotics singer/guitarist **STEVE DREWETT** has a new band, called **INDESTRUCTIBLE BEAT** that you should keep a watch for) and Attilla The Stockbroker who set up this show and graciously opened it. Atilla is a poet of the tradition of John Cooper Clarke, in that his show is a mixture of poems both comic and serious (or both), with jokes interspersed in between to keep things lively. But he also plays a mandola (he calls it Nelsen Mandola") which is a related cousin to the mandolin, and sings some of his pieces in fine, comic style. Like Clarke, Attilla is a comic genius and a scream and a half; he's also a hell of a lot easier to understand than the great Clarke 'cause he doesn't talk so damn fast and his accent isn't as unforgiving. The Square was filled with laughter at Mr. Stockbroker's wit and political acid tongue, and all were sad to see him vacate the stage to take up the role of M.C. Blythe Power were a weird experience with dancers, and a singing drummer who sets up a sparce kit at the front center of the stage, he half sits/half stands on a high stool. Pretty good, but they played way too long, they were on for decades, or was it millenniums? And the vocalist plays the drums much better when he's not singing, noticeably so, which is not a good thing. Ah well, we knew TV Smith would be coming on eventually, and that was exciting

enough! Atilla obviously holds Smith in very high regard, he introduced him as one of the greatest songwriters in the world (agreed), and out comes the ex-**ADVERTS** guy himself, underneath a giant Mad Hatters' hat that he wore throughout the show, and a cane that recalled The Penguin (Burgess Meredith) on Batman more than Charlie Chaplan the way he was swinging it around. Cheap is a basic 4 piece, drums, guitar, bass and T.V., but it's true, Smith's songs soar above the commonplace, and his lyrics cut as few others can. It's funny, you wait 12 years to see someone play who you've always admired, and presto, there he is before you as right as rain. What else can make you happy? Smith is supposed to release an LP soon on **CAPTAIN SENSIBLE**'s (an old fan) label Deltic Records, can't wait to hear that! On the minus side, the roll of film I took of this show (and Liverpool, and Learning Process, and Shamen/Inspiral Carpets) for some reason didn't come out, clear evidence that Boris and Natasha were involved. Damn it to hell!

STONE ROSES (from Manchester, UK, Dingwalls, North London, 5/22/89)

An astounding show from a band whose great records fail to do them justice. Stone Roses are suddenly the best new band in existence, justifying all the hype they're suddenly receiving in the UK. Their show at the ICA on the mall had sold out the previous week, so it was fortunate this gig happened on the rebound, Stone Roses are something no one should miss! Little did we know it was perhaps the last small club gig that Stone Roses would ever play in England. In the 6 months since, they've routinely sold out 4000-6000 seat venues, whether in London or Manchester or Blackpool, even though they've insisted on playing unusual places that are never used for rock gigs (like film studios). It's just as well, their fans were animals, many of whom had made the three hour trip from Manchester. Pushing and shoving from the opening, they sang along on most of the songs while being tossed to and fro, an unruly mob. Being anywhere near the front was not a sane idea amidst the human earthquake, with many falling to the ground, and most losing sight of the friends they'd come with. Bruise city even for the hardy. In between being knocked about (about 1/3 of the photos I took ended up being of the ceiling, the ground, someone's kneecap, etc. though the original subject intended was band members!), the band was blowing everyone away. Perhaps guitarist **JOHN SQUIRE** is the most talented and innovative in the isle since Johnny Marr; he uses more wah-wah live, but like Marr it's more his lines than his sounds that so captivates. Drummer **RENI** is like a little Keith Moon in a silly hat, with his crappy little kit being pounded so hard it's strange he doesn't get himself a better one! Somehow while slamming away, he manages to provide the lilting Hollies' like harmonies that transform their average melodies into great ones. Squire and bassist **GARY** lean over their instuments being too cool to be cool, so it's up to singer **IAN BROWN** to hold the visual interest (when not watching the drums being demolished!), and Brown is about the best non-instrument playing front man imaginable. He's part early Bono, part Richard Jobson, and part Mick Jagger, in that he almost obnoxiously acts like he's the greatest thing, only (fortunately) he is! Ego and self-love can merely be cockiness when someone has obviously got it. You should see Brown, constantly waving his mic like he was shaking up a drink, pouting almost McCulloch style and dancing and undualating with both arms swinging throughout the set. His voice seems stronger on stage where he's letting loose, not being anywhere near as coy and restrained as in the studio, and his voice glistens in it's beauty, a strange paradox given his behavior. Opening right up with "I Wanna Be Adored" from the album that had been released that very week, it was the perfect statement by a band that basks in the attention as if it were their birthright. Theirs is such a powerful and gorgeous sound it's hard to keep from swooning. Stone Roses, after 4 years in obscurity, have learned a thing or two about lighting, dynamics, buildups, and being more than just another band. Live their songs seem not compositions, but mini-movies, each an encore of its own. Some like "Made of Stone," and "She Bangs the Drums" had the stuff of legends in the swirling sound of Squire meeting the dense fog and prominent vocals of the other 3. The best moment though was the closing "I am The Resurrection" (Stone Roses, in typical cheek, do no encores), which ran even longer than the closing LP version. On the almost funk jam second half, Brown danced like a maniac, as rapid, blinding strobes flashed for a solid three or four minutes, making it difficult to watch, a complete assault of sound and vison gone slighty askew. A rare evening by a new phenomenon. If they come to America, make sure you see them. If nothing else, it would be curious to see them play without the mass hysteria that surrounds them there. Or will that have made it over here with them as well by the time they come? A lamb that roars like a humongous lion.

GREAT STONE ROSES AT DINGWALLS 5/22/89. LAST EVER LONDON SMALL CLUB GIG? (PHOTO: JACK RABID)

MEGA CITY 4 (from Farnborough, UK, Fulham Greyhound, West London, UK 5/20/89)

As mentioned with their photo last issue, the Greyhound was crowded and unbelievably hot, certainly as steaming (if not more) than the most abusive old Rock Hotel '84 shows (like The Effigies or DOA), with tempertures over 100 degrees or more. This is not the ideal way to enjoy any show, someone ought to form a benefit to buy this no-ventilation sweatbox an air conditioner (or at the very least, a fan). So you know that if the live act can somehow make you forget, if only momentarily, the great discomfort you are experiencing, they must be something! Mega City play more gigs than anyone in the island (a fact celebrated in the title of thier new LP Transaphobia), and as expected, they are a seriously tight, punishing quartet, vastly

MEGA CITY 4 DRIPS WITH SWEAT AT LONDON'S GREYHOUND, AN INFERNO 5/20/89 (PHOTO: JACK RABID)

improved since their Portsmouth support slot with **RED LETTER DAY** in Sept. '88. Were it not for **WIZ**'s sugar melodies, the constant march of 2 blasting guitars would get as tedious as the heat, but instead one has to supress an impulse to sing along (for fear of more dehydration!). The perspiration on the leaping band flowed like a tap with a substantial leak, how many pounds (stone over there) do you suppose they lost, and how do they keep from fainting? The album and a few old singles came rushing out, but the most memorable was the last, a glorious encore of the 2nd single "Clear Blue Sky," where the guitars finally drop out, and Wiz's (and crowd's) earnest singing soars up into the stratosphere his words evoke (if we were looking skyward it was in hope of a sprinkler system sudenly going off). Grins were visible submerged behind sopping faces, we all filed out sweating more all over each other. Oppressive yes, but damn well worth it. The best of UK punk, because history will judge them as a loud pop act, they sting live.

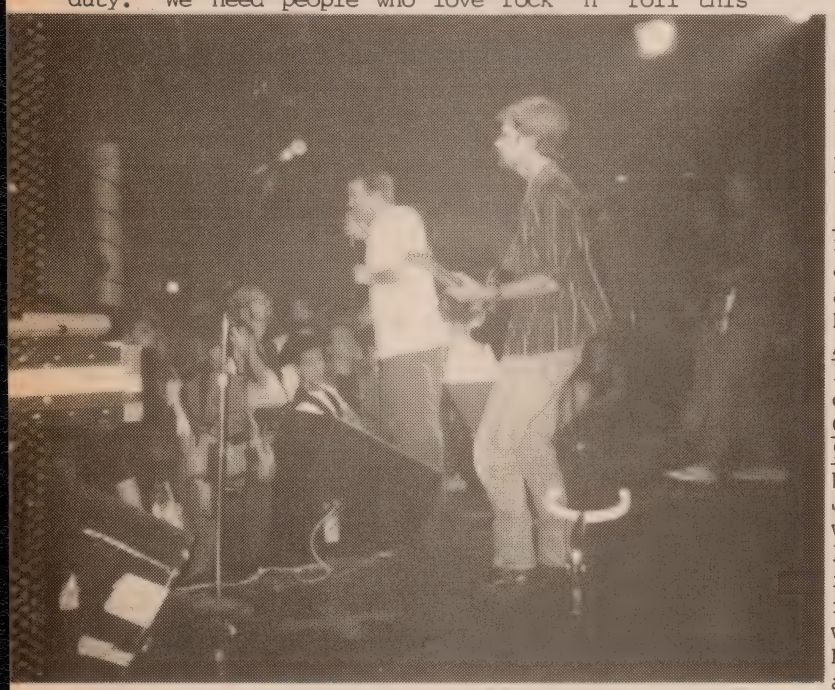
"I DON'T GO OUT MUCH ANYMORE": **FLOWER** at Pyramid, 5/2/89: Much like their last Pyramid gig 2/16, in fact, they brought back departed drummer **ANDREW BORDWIN** one last time since they'd yet to replace him (their upcoming December gig will feature the new drummer, ex of **NICE STRONG ARM**). Bordwin was great, nice to get one extra last chance to see him play. Bassist singer **IAN JAMES** is still the guy to watch, as he seemingly attempts to rip the strings off his guitar and hurtles his Lemmy-like voice at the poor, unsuspecting mic. If you can find his face behind his hair (the Cousin It of post-punk?), you must not blink much. The **BALIYUT** brothers dissonant, counter guitars subvert a common riff like a virus infects the body. Stuff from both LPs, Concrete and the upcoming Hologram Sky. A grinding, abusive yet deceptively catchy sound that's great to see. Now if only Maxwells and CBGB would let them play regularly as Pyramid does. ■**SALEM 66** (From Boston), **SPRINGHOUSE, THOSE MELVINS** at Pyramid, 5/11/89: Didn't see much of Those Melvins, but they seemed to be an OK happy sounding pop band, well rehearsed and pretty good sound/material. Give 'em a few points for the **ONLY ONES** cover too, even if we wish that bands would realize they wrote and recorded quite a few more songs than the "only one" that anyone ever covers, "Another Girl, Another Planet." (Replacements and Blases as well) Springhouse I also didn't see much of since I'm their drummer. Lucky me! I will say we were pleased to support Salem 66, as this turned out to be their last ever NY area appearance after so many over their 7 years. They unfortunately could have picked a better way to go out, however. They didn't hit the stage until 'round 2 on a work/school night, so most had cleared out before they ever went on, a pity. Perhaps their draw was declining here, in that in older times even an obstacle like a late hour was not a deterrant for most of their local fans. I don't know, but the atmosphere seemed kind of dead as a result. The Salems gamely played well anyway, mixing in a bunch of new ones we hope will appear on their forthcoming posthumous farewell LP, plus the better tracks from the last LP like "Lucky Penny" and "Isabella." Sorry to see them go, definitely. Hard to believe we'll never see them again! ■**THE ZULUS** (From Boston), **THE MARCH** (From Providence) and **SPRINGHOUSE** at The Rocket, Providence, RI 6/9/89: Zulus contain former members of **HUMAN SEXUAL RESPONSE** and have a **BOB MOULD** produced LP out on Slash Records. They absolutely packed the place, they're real popular in New England. However, from this show they're tired neo-Heavy Metal wank rock, no different from a thousand Bon Jovis or Guns and Roses or whoever. Don't know what Mr. Mould and Slash (or anyone else) sees in them! 2nd time catching The March, who as it turned out, were also unknowingly playing their final show. Again, the singer's fascination with Joy Division's Ian Curtis is far too all encompasing to ignore, but he had a pretty sharp band behind him, particularly guitarist **ERIC MOFFET** who is an excellent player. Ignoring the drony vocals and concentrating on the intriguing guitar work was the key to enjoying them, but now they are no more anyway, so kiss that goodbye. Too bad. Springhouse had one of their better gigs, if I do say so myself, would love to play in Providence again. ■**SPRINGHOUSE, SASSY WASSY** at CBGB, with **NEW MODEL ARMY**, CBGB, 6/11/89: What another, Springhouse gig? Our CBGB debut, great to open for a band me and our guitarist Mitch have admired for so long. Sassy Wassy on the other hand were among the worst, and most out of place bands to ever play at CBGB, particularly on a bill with NMA. They make the Zulus look new wave. Bad cliched cock-rock to the 9th power, an extreme in banality that would have been funny it it were parody, which it was not. A waste. ■**NAKED STATUE** and **SPRINGHOUSE** at The Beat, Port Chester, NY, 6/15/89: Springhouse finishing it's small mini-tour #1 (we also played the ridiculous if valient Sideshows at The Seashore series at Coney Island with Mommyheads 6/2/89), our first time doing two sets sandwiched around a fine rockin' set by Naked Statue from the Nyack area. Relying less on covers and working up a stronger set of originals has done wonders for them, transforming them in a flash to one of the better local bands. One song that reminds in particular of The Replacements' "I Will Dare" is so catchy it gives one the impulse to snap your fingers (my Dad always did in the car when Sinatra came on the radio. Yours too?). Damn good. ■**URGE OVERKILL** (from Chicago) at CBGB, 6/17/89: Another one bites the dust. Once a promising post-punk **STEVE ALBINI** produced band, they're the latest to go metal. Is metal a disease that just settles down on our punk, hardcore, post-punk and pop bands, or were these people secretly harboring ambitions to sound like Molly Hatchet and Def Lepard (these days Warrant) all their lives? Five songs and out, should

have walked out sooner. ■GIBSON GIRLS at Chameleon, 7/7/89: Chameleon has since closed, but for a short while it seemed like a viable small club in the East Village. Gibson Girls is the new band built around former **CHAPPAQUIDICK +5** leader **TIM BROUN**, and you get just what you'd expect, heavy guitar pop somewhere between 60's Mod and The NY Dolls. The band kicks nicely and has a nice batch of songs, so they bear watching. ■**HONEYMOON KILLERS, SPRINGHOUSE** at Pyramid 7/14/89: New Music Seminar gig, on the 200th anniversary of the storming of The Bastille. Honeymoon Killers were noisy and fun, if not really my taste. Their material could stand to improve but their reputation is based on their clashing, un-pretty sounds, and this they do well. Springhouse? We tried to make the most of the half hour we were alotted. That's the seminar folks! Too many bands, not enough time. Ah well,

R.E.M.'S MICHAEL STIPE JOINS HUGO LARGO ON STAGE FOR THEIR FAREWELL PERFORMANCE, KNITTING FACTORY, 7/15/89. R.I.P. HUGO LARGO. PHOTO:JACK RABID

it's still worth it. ■**HUGO LARGO** at Knitting Factory, 7/15/89: Before heading up for the original Damned at The Ritz, stopped by Knitting Factory to catch HL one last time. It wasn't announced as a farewell show, but many knew it was since the group hadn't been getting along for some time. This was every bit as terrific as their last gig here 2/24, it's a damn shame they quit not only when they were finally on the verge of great success (with super-fan **BRIAN ENO** set to produce their next LP), but when they'd finally come into their own as a live act as well. **HAHN ROWE**'s violin was a dazzling instrument, utilized in a way never before heard. **REM**'s **MICHAEL STIPE** joined the group on stage for one song as well. The place was sold out, both shows, at least they went out with a great show, though that does make it awfully bittersweet, doesn't it? ■GIBSON GIRLS at Pyramid 7/26/89: Very poorly attended gig (like 10-15 people), but another fine set. Guess they could use some help with publicity, the music is there. ■**WALDOS** at Continental Divide, 8/7/89: Always good to check in with **WALTURE LURE** (you know, ex of **HEARTBREAKERS**), since he's got such a good, if nostalgic band these days. Of course, you expect Lure and band to do his biggest Heartbreakers' songs like "One Track Mind" as well as some old **KINKS**' covers, or "Hey Little Girl," as well of his Heartbreakers-like current originals like the hoppin' "Crazy Kids." Lure is always can't miss entertainment. But this show had a special extra treat. None other than Mr. Heartbreaker himself, **JOHNNY THUNDERS** was there, as drunk as he could be (what happened to the new Mr. Clean image?), and it doesn't take a veteran horseplayer to figure out the odds of Thunders joining his old pal on stage. The surprise is that it took so long, Johnny didn't go up 'til it was the end of the set, to help with "Do You Love Me." That's fine! Who else could sing "I can really shake 'em down" better than Thunders? The postage stamp size stage had barely held the Waldos, much less addding a wooey Thunders, but somehow they just bounced off each other as the song came to its colapsing finish. But that's not all, you know we're going to get an encore, and you know Thunders will be there again! But what's this, **CLEM BURKE** (late of **BLONDIE, RAMONES, IGGY POP** etc), one of the greatest drummers of all time, is also behind the skins! Oh man, too good to be true! The selection is equally well chosen, **BO DIDDLEY**'s "Pills," which Thunders knows well from his days in **NEW YORK DOLLS**. Of course, Heartbreakers borrowed the song for their own "Too Much Junkey Business," so sometimes Johnny sang his lyrics, sometimes he sang Bo's. A smashing cover, either way! Burke exited to much applause, Waldos drummer returns, and before you can say Dee Dee Ramone, it's "Chinese Rocks" and now everyone is going crazy. Walter looks happy as a clam. Yeah, yeah, why not reform the Heartbreakers. Everyone else is doing it these days. Great bands are hard to come by now! ■SPRINGHOUSE at Maxwells, 8/10/89: Looks like we've been playing a lot more often compared to last issue. In fact, it seems like a lot of the gigs I go to these days coincidently turn out to be my own. Pretty lame! In any case, we'd like to thank Eric Spicer for joining us for our last song, a full 7 minute version of **BUZZCOCKS**' "I Believe" made up especially for the occasion. As this was my first (last?) stab at singing in front of a band, I thought it was pretty funny, hope people got the impromptu spirit of things. Little did we know we'd soon (3 months later) get to hear the real band themselves do that same song (infinitely better) to close their own set here at the Ritz and Trenton. So thanks, Eric, that was nice of you. As Naked Raygun has covered no less than 4 Buzzcocks songs in their gigs round here, it was a pretty safe assumption that he knew the song! ■**JESSIE MALIN** at Continental Divide 8/15/89: A nice acoustic set before hitting The Last at Pyramid. Malin you may know from his two previous bands, **HEART ATTACK**, the youngest and loudest on the old '80-'83 NYC hardcore/punk scene, and his still current band **HOPE**, who're apparently on sabbatical as they've not played in at least a year. Malin started off with a reverent version of "Russian Roulette" by **LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH** (big **STIV BATORS** fan I guess), and went on from there to mix Hope and newer material. Malin's voice is a little on the plaintive side, but his overall good attitude and obvious joy at playing was well appreciated. It's hard to believe he's the same ex-nervous runt who used to bark like Strummer on Heart Attack songs like "English Cunts," but we allow people to grow up if they do a good job of it. Not bad for an acoustic set (not everyone is Bob Dylan or Roddy Frame after all). ■SPRINGHOUSE at The Beat, Port Chester, NY with **THE LAST** 8/16/89: Last year when The Last played the Beat they did 4 sets, playing literally all night. No such luck this time, as they'd just picked up a new drummer in time for the tour. Nothing to say about Springhouse's opening set, but those who stayed through the end of The Last's got a dubious surprise,

namely 2/3 of Springhouse joining The Last on stage for some covers from the Woodstock album (since this was the big 20th anniversary hoopla week), probably good if you were drinking, though I feel sorry for the sober. Before that, the other member of Springhouse also joined The Last on drums (who me?) for 3 old songs from The Last's 1st LP L.A. Explosion, "Every Summer Day," "Looking at You" and a version of "Slavedriver" so fast, it took this reporter much by surprise (they sure pulled a fast one on that guest drummer). ■ GODFATHERS at New Ritz 8/19/89: After Naked Raygun's set, most anything would have seemed redundant, but with each show and record one grows more disenchanted with Godfathers (Godawfuls?), they weren't that bad when they were **SID PRESLEY EXPERIENCE**, and the early Godfathers as well, but they're beginning to look and sound like fat-cats, and they're boogie rock with metal guitar, once fresh is becoming as stale as last night's Blimpee. Attitude in rock music is that all important intangible; when it sours it devastates all good in its path. ■ **OTIS BALL AND THE CHAINS** at Knitting Factory 8/21/89: So I get it. This guy Otis Ball sensibly leaves the cultural mecca known as Dekalb, IL for the more above ground Hoboken, signs on to Bar None Records, and gets a job working at the local record store. Perfect guy to front his own band, with a sunny disposition you rarely see in today's bands. Enthusiasm is one of those catching colds that makes up for the largest of sins, and if Ball's band isn't that tight, it doesn't matter, it doesn't have to be. Otis aims to please and easily does, not only with his own brand of rootsy-rock, but his oddball selection of covers recently compiled onto a cassette. Tonight's usually well chosen one was "What is The Life" by **GEORGE HARRISON**, from his first and best solo LP 20 years ago, the triple LP outpouring known as All Things Must Pass. Hell, Otis even changed clothes and went incognito to play guitar with Freedie Johnson who was up next, pretty good double duty. We need people who love rock 'n' roll this much. Boy do we ever! ■ CONNELLS (from North Carolina) at Cat Club 8/22/89: It's not that Connells are bad. They're really pretty good, and if you see them on MTV or something, they'll sound great surrounded by much less creative groups. The trouble is they seem afraid to stray from a well developed staple. They packed in the spacious Cat Club, so this is obviously a criticism not shared by many, but as the set wore on they became less and less compelling despite such a well crafted guitar sound, nice vocals and ample hooks. It's not being greedy to expect bands to branch out more from what they know best. Particularly if they're going to play more than an hour like that. The last thing a group should want is to make your mind wander, particularly towards one's home late at a nightclub.... ■ **HOODOO GURUS** (from Aus) at new Ritz, 8/25/89: Social Distortion had finished up at Montana Studios, plenty of time for dinner and head on over to Hoodoo Gurus. Unfortunately, once one of the better bands happening a mere 4 or 5 years ago, they've made two straight lackluster, boring LPs that seem intentionally tailored for US AOR radio, rather than the good time garage pop heights of Stoneage Romeos and Mars Needs Guitars. The old stuff sounded fine, some of the singles off the new LP, and Blow Your Cool were OK, and the encore cover of **IGGY POP**'s "I Got a Right" was fast and spot on. And any set with "I Want You Back" in it will have at least one big thrill, but in many ways, although this was a good show, the spark has died out for this band. Still capable of entertaining somewhat, but where's the former greatness, lost in the edge-less dense guitar of **BRAD SHEPPARD**. Even **DAVE FAULKNER** is starting to look a little fatigued. Too bad. ■ **BLASES, SPRINGHOUSE** at Court Tavern, New Brunswick, NJ, 9/8/89: Nothing to say about our set, it was fun enough. But what happened to Blases drummer **ROB**? I'm told this is the one and only time this happened, but here it is showtime and he's nowhere to be found! In fact, from drinking slightly more than he should have, he's apparently passed out somewhere and no one can find him! The other 3 are on the stage and ready to go and the crowd is growing restless, so Blases borrow drummers from **SPIRAL JETTY** and Springhouse, doing covers by **CHUCK BERRY, SWEET, FLINSTONES BEATLES, ONLY ONES**, etc. Finally, Rob ambles in escorted by his manager, and the set proceeds in a more normal fashion, with Rob struggling to stay awake! Funny as hell! Not that bad either. Better to check out Blases again the following night: ■ **BLASES** at Live Tonight, Hoboken, 9/9/89: OK, everyone is fine tonight, and Blases rock as their debut LP does. Some of the same covers as last night only with their real drummer, plus a few new ones of equally good taste, like **THE DAMNED**'s "Drinking About My Baby" from The Black Album, a tune written by **RAT SCABIES** also covered live in '87 by **M.I.A.** Much, much, much better overall, and no wonder too! ■ **GRAY NETWORK, JERRY's COMBO, SPRINGHOUSE** at J.C. Dobbs, Philadelphia, 9/10/89: Gray Network were pretty good, another post punk act with mild Joy Division influences. Jerry's Combo were a mishmash of different styles, which was nice to see. Philadelphia has a lot of local bands, but most residents complain the scene is too small (smallest place Buzzcocks played, that's for sure, was Philly). As for Springhouse, this was their Philly debut, glad to make the trip. Hopefully go back soon. ■ **AMANDA KRAMER & TIM SOMMER** at Knitting Factory 9/13/89: Hugo Largo is gone but a month, and here's Sommer out playing with Kramer, better known for her associations with **INFORMATION SOCIETY** and **GOLDEN PALOMINOS** (replacing **SYD STRAW**). Kramer has some label interest and it's not hard to see why. Her sound may be lush, commercial and overly accessible, just the kind



THE CONNELLS AT CAT CLUB 8/22/89 PHOTO:JACK RABID

that's not often my cup of tea, but she possesses such a nice voice, and some of her songs are so good it's not funny. A recent demo produced by **BOB MOULD** is making the rounds and is lovely beyond this live show. Talent is something that can often transcend the form chosen to present it, this was surprisingly pretty good, a hell of a nice voice indeed! ■ **SPRINGHOUSE, NAKED STATUE** at Mr. Rips, Valley Cottage (near Nyack), NY 9/14/89: Last time at the home of Naked Statue, as a month later they split up. Really bad timing, 'cause they'd improved a lot, and their most recent recordings were really great! Hopefully, N.S. leader **BEN VOSS** will find some new people to play with, and here's also hoping that he finds a way to release their studio work, as it's definitely better than 90% of what comes in the door these days. Lost another one just as they were getting somewhere. Damn. ■ **THROWING MUSES** at Nassau Coliseum, Uniondale, NY, 9/20/89: **R.E.M.** always had good taste in support acts. The Muses have become one of the better new major label acts of late, and this was one of the more solid opening sets we've seen in arena conditions (which means the audience is just starting to file in, most of whom have no idea who the band is aside from the name in the advertisement). For their trouble they were well received by the REM crowd, very pleasant. Vocally they've improved a great deal since their earlier records, and they were an added delight to what was a great evening. Sorry to hear the bass player quit a month after this show, she was particularly good. Strange these people quitting just as their bands are possibly on the verge of "making it." ■ **NEIL YOUNG** on Saturday Night Live, TV, 9/30/89: Young's post **BUFFALO SPRINGFIELD** and **CSNY** stuff has never done much for me, but credit where credit is due. He was great on this show! The studio version of "Keep on Rocking in the Free World" is pretty lame, but he should release a live version from this show, it had real balls and a real edge. What a surprise! This easily conjured up memories of him singing "Mr. Soul" on TV in the mid-60's when he was one intense dude, much more interesting than "For What it's Worth," say. Wonder where he regained the spark, in time for a national TV appearance? Good band too. ■ **BLASES** at Lismar Lounge, 10/10/89: Pretty much the same as the Live Tonight show, only in the much cooler surroundings of the cave-like, basement party gig atmosphere of Lismar. Of course, what the club has in spirit it lacks in P.A. and acoustics, but ain't that always the way! Few clubs ever had both, Max's being one that did. In some ways Lismar is the the modern equivalent of A7 and 171A, in that if you came to have fun and catch a band at its rawest, you were in luck. Otherwise forget it! Blases videoed the show, maybe we'll see that someday. ■ **TIM SOMMER AND BARBARA GOGAN** at CBGB 10/11/89: It turns out Sommer is just backing up Amanda Kramer, and that this is actually his post-**HUGO LARGO** project. He picked a great partner, as Gogan is one of the best female singers, and has been since the punk era. If you never heard the 3 albums and several singles by her old band in England **THE PASSIONS**, check 'em out some time. In fact, Sommer/Gogan did two old Passions hits, their best and best known singles. Since this is just bass, guitar and vocals, it sounded very different to hear "I'm in Love With a German Film Star" and "Sanctuary" without drums, but these simple, sincere versions were lovely to take in. The rest of the material, all new and original was somewhere between the two's former acts (if we mean late Passions, circa '82), with Sommer's unusual sense of time and rhythm again making up for the lack of percussion, as if he were a percussion instrument. Gogan's sighing "nighty night" voice and usual sparse guitar melts into that slow bass in just the right way. If this is their first gig, this will be as great as we expect from these two. ■ **BOB MOULD** at Ritz, 10/13/89: Sorry, missed **BIG DIPPER**'s opening set by accident. My loss! Mould was much better than at Maxwells April 30. The big improvement seems to be the replacement of talented by lazy guitarist **CHRIS STAMEY** with an old chum from I think Minneapolis, who basically kicked Mould's butt in a way Stamey would never consider. In a sense, they've put some of the power back into Mr. Mould's attack without making it sound like **HUSKER DU.** A much better match for their leader's unbridled tenacity and emotion, even bassist **TONY MAIMONE** seemed more into it this time, and drummer **ANTON FIER** was no longer able to overpower the rest of the band with his too-perfect drumming (still the human drum machine). Nice to see Mould is starting to do well, a good 2000 enjoyed this show. ■ **SPRINGHOUSE** at CBGB, 10/20/89: Wow, headlining CBGB on a weekend! Very exciting. Our best show to date too! Yeah! ■ **HARDONS** (from Australia) at CBGB, 10/24/89: Expected a lot more from Hardons, based on their great new single, which they opened with (see review elsewhere). However, it was all downhill after that, as they played everything way too fast (that single included), and worst of all, at the same tempo! They thrash 'em out so hard and fast all distinction is lost in the blur, and the volume level was ridiculous! A racket that held no chords and no melodies, which is what there is to enjoy about bands like these. Worse, the drummer does all the singing, which always means diminishing visual returns, and you can't see his face behind all the hair! Neither can you see the faces of the bass and guitar either, for the same reason. Three overgrown Mr. Potatoes bashing our eardrums for a solid hour at the same breakneck speed is not what you want from their records, and not what is normally called entertainment. Misplaced intensity! A home we will go, a home we will go, hi ho the merry-o... ■ **EXENE**, (from L.A.) **13 ENGINES** (from Toronto) and **SPRINGHOUSE** at Pyramid Club 10/25/89: Exene solo is a bad idea. Her off-key voice was always the low point of any **X** show over the years, and though she comes closer now than in the past, that's still not good enough. Her material is a mixture of mature rockers and surprisingly sad experiments in jazz/rock and folk. Her country roots (see **THE KNITTERS** LP) were OK, that's a form that can sustain off-key vocals, but overall this was annoying. Bring back **JOHN DOE** or forget it! Do people actually buy her record? Actually, the single you hear on the radio isn't that bad, but approach her live shows with extreme caution, it could be hazardous to your disposition. 13 Engines were much better, well written indie rock with more than competent vocals, just the kind the majors are signing in droves these days, it's strange they're still indie after 2 albums. Maybe not for long. Much of the audience had yet to arrive when they (and Springhouse) were playing though. That's the seminar for you! ■ **LOVERS AND OTHER MONSTERS, SPRINGHOUSE, CARNAL GARAGE** and **RAGING LEMMINGS** at Green Street Station, Jamaica Plain (SW Boston), MA, 10/27/89: Raging Lemmings were new, young, raspy, and badly rehearsed. Seen it a hundred times, they're getting by on attitude just now. Check back later. Carnal Garage were better, sounding a bit like The Fall, who it seems the singer likes. Just a guess. As for Springhouse, just as CBGB was our best gig to date, this was our worst. The

soundman was no help, and we sounded awful (I have the tape to prove it). Ah well, mom always said there'd be nights like these. Mother knows best, right? Lovers and Other Monsters were making their live debut since leader **TONY** left the local favorite industrial noise band **SLEEP CHAMBER.** This band bore no resemblance to that sound, though, more atmospheric rock with 2, count 'em 2, **ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN** covers, "My Kingdom" from Ocean Rain, and surprisingly enough, a badly played version of "Broke My Neck" (b-side of "A Promise"), which could be blamed on their choice of guest drummers for this set (me), that guy seemed awfully tired, and he sure looked familiar. Rent a drummer for that special occasion, short notice a specialty? (nah, he cheated, that was a notebook full of notes on his lap). Basically, Lovers are going to need a lot of work. They've got the material OK, if you like something between Echo, The Furs, and The Lorries, the singing is good too, but they've got to tighten it up considerably. About what you'd expect for a first gig, hope they keep at it. That's it for this section, it is embarrassingly self-serving this time, yes it is. My apologies. Hopefully, you didn't mind too much. I don't know what to say about all these gigs I (we) played anyway, but I figured they were worth at least mentioning.

Reviews by Caroline Pari
Or: You mean there are shows I went to that Jack didn't?

Billy Bragg (from London, Inter-Media Arts Center, Huntington, L.I., 11/2/89)

Billy seems to be doing only benefits lately, this one being for the Long Island Progressive Coalition and earlier in the week he played at the Lone Star for an Abbie Hoffman benefit. I mention this because Bragg has a sparkling connection with his audience, usually the political progressive. One walks away from his show incredibly overwhelmed with facts about government oppression around the world and more knowledgeable of socialist history in general. One thing about Bragg's politics is that he doesn't just espouse socialism as THE way to go, but he urges us to believe in our basic rights as humans which are gradually being taken away by our governments. (Currently in Britain, Irish nationlists are not allowed to be heard on TV--it's a law!!!) He thinks of politics in a global sense, the way we all should, because whoever we elect as President affects the world. Bragg advises that we form our political ideologies with our heads and our hearts. To paraphrase: "You don't know anything about loving your fellow human if you haven't loved someone." And that's socialism for you. (See the Antonio Gramsci quote on Workers Playtime.)
What about the show, you ask? Well, of the nearly 2 and a half hours of Bragg's performance about half was spent in this type of informative discourse. The small size of the place was conducive to this conversational atmosphere (about 500 seats, not sold out, apparently the benefit broke even or made very little, oh well!). Bragg even hung out and talked to people in the lobby while the opening acts performed. He is such a warm person, friendly to all, except to those who kept requesting autographs, I think he'd rather talk to people. It's rare to find such accessibility to your favorite musicians, it was well-appreciated!!!! The show opened and closed with the instrumental "Internationale" (the socialist anthem, until 1941 the Soviet Union anthem) Bragg's did his own rendering of its verses, a "work-in-progress," later on. He was requested by Pete Seeger, at a recent Canadian benefit, to write his own words since the English version is archaic--a momentous and privleged task which he is more than qualified to do.

He did two songs written by others before delving into his own stuff with "Help Save the Youth of America." (Also performed on David Letterman that same night). A lot of his early songs like "Love Gets Dangerous" were interspersed with newer stuff. There were a few special treats: After giving his socialist interpretation of a William Blake poem, "Jerusalem," he sang it accompanied by a pianist, Cara Tivey. This beautiful song chilled the audience, Bragg looked so fragile, he adapts so easily from rock to the classics. (I'd just like to say that as an English doctoral student currently studying the Romantics, I nearly fainted in my seat when I heard this. I told my professor about Bragg the next day). Finally, with Wiggy and Cara on stage, the three launched into an explosive "Waiting for the Great Leap Forwards." This concluded the half hour of encores. We could hardly breathe easily after this show--it was a neverending bombardment of political consciousness-raising and great music. We didn't know if we should be depressed about the horrible situation our world is in or happy about seeing Bragg live. The only criticism I can make is that Bragg may have taken the stereotypical ignorant American image too seriously because he was basically preaching to the converted, (he didn't tell me much of what I didn't know already) but alas, he inspired us to spread the word!!

Fulton Mall (from Brooklyn, Knitting Factory, 10/28)
Fulton Mall is a character created and performed by the witty and immensely talented Thomas Keener whose act transcends definition although one could say he is a raconteur, a monologist, or an actor, as long as one avoids the pretentious "performance artist." He writes his own material which consists of humorous, and thought-provoking anecdotes of Fulton's childhood in Richmond Hill, Queens where characters such as Irish grandmothers to homosexual Italian cops from South Ozone Park will appear. Keener's talent lies in his ability to recreate the idiosyncratic dialects each character demands. This particular night Fulton remembered his father's obsession with explaining sex to everyone from his children to his colleagues. We were introduced to his brother, Paul Mall and his sister-in-law, Ronnie, and their son Timmy who appear on stage with their stuffy, pretentious, callous, condescending speeches about Fulton as a failure in life. Perhaps as revenge Fulton accidentally murders them later on. Keener twists the meaning of success when the ghost of Timmy haunts him only to thank him for not making him the perfect yuppie. The ending was a real treat

when Jesus, Fulton's agent, appears only to be berated for not getting him shows at P.S. 122. Fulton Mall is definitely a holy talent that everyone should experience once in a lifetime.

THE WEIRDOS (from L.A., Country Club, Reseda, CA, 1/89): (By KEVIN HOGAN) Nostalgiacs unite! Let's face it, '89 proves we're all patiently biding time until the summer of 2006, which will mark the "no future" 30 year reunion farewell tour of The Sex Pistols at New Jersey Yankee Stadium. Banks, post offices, and museums will close in observance of Sid Vicious Day, and Rotten/Lydon, Cook and Jones, AARP membership cards in hand, will stage a last hurrah with Glen Matlock's grand son filling in the quartet. Meanwhile we have to make do with more obscure heroes and legends, as I was able to one fine night this year, when the immortal Weirdos were reassembled to gloriously kick the keester of this decade as it coughs and wheezes its way into posterity. Minor setbacks plagued this rare opportunity to commune with true genius. First, for some stupifying remote reason, Weirdos were headlining a hardcore night, following the execrable SLAPSHOT from Boston. The crowd was an unhealthy mix of underage skinheads looking for a thrash fix, with a few hispanic gang-members thrown in to generally intimidate the 5 or 6 of us who appeared to be over 16. Unaccountably, however, peace reigned, the boring bands packed up, and the brothers DENNY hit the stage, guitarist DIX in the most godawful psychedelic polyester shirt and singer JOHN resplendent in a black turtleneck with Bowler derby, looking like a demented extra kicked off the set of "Clockwork Orange!" One lowpoint here was the inclusion of the insufferable FLEA of RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS on bass (agreed--ed), who insisted on slapping his fender with the treble turned all the way down (yeesh.. boo.. hiss.. 40 lashes with spiked wet noodles). Flea's muddy playing could in no way overpower this material, though, as Weirdos scorched out the hits as if the Neutron bomb had already hit! Forget the introspective material like "Idle Life," "I Feel," or even "Life of Crime." The Dennys & friends concentrated on pile-driving straightforward monster songs at maximum adrenalized tempos (Sorry Jack, never confirmed who the drummer was). Records do not convey the genuine eccentric inspiration behind this band John Denny's possessed eyes coordinated with his rapid fire punk staccato delivery (at one point I thought he was going to spit out his teeth) would instantly certify him at any mental institution. Brother Dix, also a rubber room candidate, provided a highlight midway through "Hideout" as he threw his head back and gushed forth a blast of his own sputum, completely drenching his upper torso, all the while furiously playing on, oblivious of the risk of drool electrocution! The evening was capped by a 78 RPM version of "Helium Bar" (one of the great all-time videos) in which the rousing one chord stutter stop cycle must have been repeated 7 or 8 times(pause..pause.. "Bopcheeleeumbopchoonagh!!"). Something close to greatness was here at hand. For the paltry 40 or 50 who stayed to see it! A bracing shot in the arm that might make getting on with the 90's just a little less foreboding. (editor's note: Weirdos have signed to Frontier records and will be releasing new discs of new material. Out of sight news! Let's hope Frontier can find some tapes of their back catalog of their amazing unreleased late 70's stuff!!)

NEW ORDER (from Manchester UK, PUBLIC IMAGE LTD (from London), SUGARCUBES (from Iceland), Brenden Byrne Arena, E. Rutherford, NJ, 7/19/89: (by GREG SAHAGIAN) Let me build the situation for you. Three decent to excellent "college" bands come to play a 22,000 seat hall. Past shows by these bands, in smaller venues, have been worth the $10. This show, however, was $18.50, and the t-shirt price could possibly be an answer to the national debt at $18 a pop. There is no way those shirts could even cost close to half of the selling price, considering they were mass produced and had very little design on them. There was also the parking price which was $2, even though I still had to walk from the racetrack to the arena because they had yet to dismantle the racecar equipment from the auto race. This means $20.50 ($38.50) with shirt) to see a show that seemed more of a fashion parade than anything else. This brings me to my next irritation. I know I'm probably getting into deep water, but weekend punks bug me a lot, especially when the clothes they wear still have the Unique sticker on them. I'm not saying that people shouldn't dress the way they please, but it seemed that most of the people at the show knew very little of the material of the bands and were there to hear that "new" band New Order or to see that crazy guy from the SEX PISTOLS (I bet half the crowd didn't even know what P.I.L. stands for). Speaking of the bands, I missed Sugarcubes, but I doubt they could have been that great. This doesn't have anything to do with the bands, the real problem is the atmosphere. It is virtually impossible for any band to come off looking good in such a situation, perhaps not even Buzzcocks, any comments Jack? (no--ed) The bands appear to be puppets in a puppet show. All the energy is stripped away. New Order were OK (they were a major interest of mine at one point). They mostly ignored their excellent older material (although they did open with "Ceremony," so...) and concentrated on Technique. Quite a shame since maybe they could have educated a few thousand people. Mr. LYDON was the laugh of the evening. His ego encompassed the entire arena, especially when he insisted on countless cheers of adoration. P.I.L. were mediocre. They too stuck to their new material. Perhaps the show at the old Ritz was more entertaining. The final word is stay away from arena or stadium shows. (Thanks Greg--ed)

CHAMELEONS/SUN AND THE MOON

MARK BURGESS interview, PART 2 (transcribed once again by CAROLINE PARI)

Part one of this interview appeared in the last issue, #26. In case you missed that, the interview took place at Burgess' favorite cafe, The San Remo, in Rochdale, Greater Manchester, England, on May 24, 1989, just down the block from where much of his music has been recorded, Suite 16 Studios (formerly Cargo studios). A week prior, THE SUN AND THE MOON had split up, but to my surprise, it was more his band before that, THE CHAMELEONS, that was on Mark's mind. Part one generated the majority of the mail on last issue, and we hope that you all find this 2nd 45 minutes as revealing. For the short history of the two groups, and a more general introduction to this interview, we refer you to last issue; in any case, if you enjoy this part two, you'd probably want to read that as well.

MARK BURGESS, THEN WITH CHAMELEONS, 9:30 CLUB, WASHINTON DC 1987. PHOTO: DAVID MOORE

CHAMELEONS-SCRIPT OF THE BRIDGE '83

CHAMELEONS-WHAT DOES ANYTHING MEAN, BASICALLY '85

Mark Burgess Interview: Part Two

Mark:...you know little things, you blow them up, don't you, out of proportion.
JR: Well, you are too close to it.
Mark: And Tony was good at coming in and saying, 'Look, you're blowing this out of proportion.' And you listen to Tony because we absolutely worshipped the man.
JR: What was his last name again?
Mark: Fletcher.
JR: And what was his official position with you. He wasn't really the manager, was he?
Mark: I've called him the manager because he was more of a manager to us than anyone we've ever met even though he wasn't the manager.
JR: He didn't book your shows? Or call up the press and stuff.
Mark: No. On our return from America he was about to leave Kennedy Street to manage the Chameleons officially. That was a company he worked for.
JR: What happened to him? From what little I've heard of it, he just disappeared under strange circumstances.
Mark: Who, Tony? He died!
JR: I know, but how?
Mark: He had a series of heart attacks.
JR: He was a really young man, wasn't he?
Mark: Yeah, he was in his forties. Tony was a man who had time for absolutely everybody and never gave himself any.
JR: Really, did he eat badly and stay up late and do all the things of a stressed out living that leads to heart attacks?
Mark: Tony didn't have an answering machine. He would answer the phone if he was there. All night, if he had to. He'd drive vast distances, not just music, not just in the business. There were sides of Tony that we have no idea of. His work with the Scout movement. Like all these poor kids in Suffolk. Getting them up canoeing and up to the mountains to show them that there was more to the world and more to life than their concrete flats that they live in. Things like that. That was Tony Fletcher. The man was an angel. I don't mean that in a sickly sense, I mean in a real sense. Religions are based on myths and ghosts 2,000 years old, so people said a certain thing and behaved in a different way. But Tony lived by example. He was the greatest human being I've ever met in me life. And I'm not going over the top. Well, I am going over the top but not undeservedly so. I wrote that that man was a rock of society to me in a sea of shit. That is more true now that he's gone than it ever was. When I feel like it's coming down on me, I think about Tony and it keeps me going.
JR: By the same token, Ruth Polski's (who booked Hurrah and Danceteria in NY. Died in a tragic car accident in front of the Limelight club in 1987) death must have come as an incredible shock as well.
Mark: Well, I didn't know Ruth as well as Tony obviously. I, and everybody that I know, people I respect in music, had the greatest respect for her. I know she really, really loved the Chameleons. I know that for a fact. She did.
JR: She was instrumental in getting you over there that first US tour.
Mark: She did all the work. The other company just took it over.
JR: Why tell me all this, considering your past refusal to talk about the Chameleons in past Sun and the Moon interviews?
Mark: When I meet people, and there's only a few, maybe less than the fingers on one hand, that I know really did love what we did, then I like to be as honest and open as I can because I think you deserve to know. It took something that severe, circumstances to be that severe, to halt us. Nothing else could. All the litigation was static, we weren't supposed to write songs, we weren't supposed to play, we weren't supposed to record, all of that was in that situation. It did not kill the band. The band kept going, the music kept getting better as far as I'm concerned. That couldn't do it. It took circumstances as severe as they were to stop us in the end. I was getting paranoid, I thought there was a fucking conspiracy. It was coming at me, at us, from every side, and I just thought, "What is life doing this to us for if not to stop us?" I was getting really paranoid because that's what it felt like.
JR: Well, with people dying on you and....
Mark: Tony turned down a lot of bands that have gone on to be very, very big in terms of officially managing. We'd been looking for someone like Tony since we started. And just at the point where he said, 'All right lads, I'm going to do it.' And I knew that with this man, Tony Fletcher, behind us, we were going to get there. Where, I don t know, but wherever it was that we were supposed to be going, we were going to get there. And just at that point where we were going to do that, the guy dies tragically. It's like being in a soap opera, but it's not funny because it's real. It took something like that to stop us. Maybe I shouldn't (unclear). I explained the situation I was in. I didn't know whether I was fucking coming or going. didn't know up from down.
JR: Well at least you have a little better circumstance now.
Mark: I got through it, that's what I got. Music helped me a lot, making music helped me get through it. But the ghost doesn't go away.
JR: Maybe you have to exorcize it.
Mark: I've tried. (unclear)
JR: I don't really hold onto ghosts.
Mark: I don't, but they just won't fucking go away.
JR: What I mean is, if I got one I decide, 'Gee, this really sucks, I better do something about it.' Whatever it is that has to be done even it's personally unpleasant I just do it.
Mark: Well, that's why Sally is an absolute tower of strength for me. She's absolutely

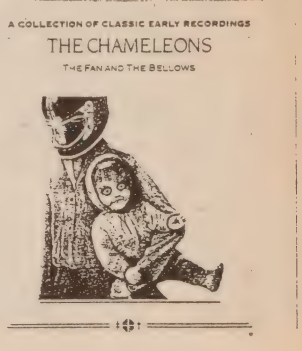
wonderful, I mean love isn't a big enough word for it.
JR: What do you remember of your American tours, anything interesting?
Mark: I remember it was like a roller coaster ride, the whole thing, then we played some of the best concerts we've ever done. I really believe that. It was brilliant, that whole tour was just wonderful. Every time I see the Mighty Lemon Drops, they played with us on that tour, when we start talking about that tour, little tears well up in our eyes. We always end up going (with sniffles): "Oh yeah, that tour, what a fucking tour that was." We never stop talking about that tour. That's how it's always going to be then. It was the best time of me life. That and Jacob's Studio. Jacob's was good for me although Dave was having a really bad time, it was not a band thing but for me...Not as a judgment of the work. I mean people still tell me that "Script of the Bridge" is their favorite record, blah, blah, blah. But as for my contribution to the Chameleons, I think my finest work is on "Strange Times." I really pushed meself to the limit, I wasn't even sleeping. I was sleeping on the floor and under the desk, and wherever I happened to fall down. I gave me room to the engineer so he could bring his girlfriend down from London. So I was just wandering around, sleeping wherever I could and getting woke up with a vacuum cleaner in me face and I'd have tea with Chrissy. I really pushed meself to the limit. Then again, Dave said he couldn't play the record when it was finished because it was too down, it was too depressing. That hurt me a little bit because I really tried me hardest to do the best work ever.
JR: Well, I think he misjudges the record. I think, actually, some of the most helpful stuff is on there.
Mark: There are some great moments, "Tears," "Caution," when you really touch it. The end of "Caution" for me is really powerful.
JR: Even lyrically, like "Time," I don't see anything depressing about that, I see it as really useful.
Mark: I think he was referring more to side one. It was what I was experiencing, that's what comes out lyrically. "Tears" was about, well, they're going to think I'm really sickly, oh I don't care what people think anyway, the best friend I ever had in me life was a dog. When we were writing for this record, Sandy, who'd been with me since I was 12, died. Reg had this really haunting thing which became "Tears" and I wanted to capture that love, do you know what I mean? That's why I wanted to have another go at it, so I pushed and pushed and pushed for it. Because I like the single, I think it's great, but it didn't have the atmosphere that I wanted to give it for Sandy. They were all on one side of the record. And the "Caution" thing as well was something I was seeing a lot of. I was surrounded by that a lot up here. I would be a traitor to the creative cause if I ignored that and just said "That'll spoil it, that's too heavy to deal with. I'll write something light and snappy." You know, ignoring what's going on to make nice, happy tunes is a fake. It's got to be real. What you write and sing about has got to be real, don't you agree?
JR: I couldn't agree more. I've never had the slightest problem with that anyway. I never understood why people thought Joy Division was depressing, for instance. I always thought that was a crock of shit too. You don't have to convince me.
Mark: It's like Eraserhead, isn't it. "Eraserhead" is a brilliant film. I've seen it once and I never want to see it again. It freaks me out. I can understand that. It doesn't deter from the quality of it, so perhaps I'm being unfair.
JR: Besides, forty years ago they called it the Blues. Since when is it not fair game to write about reality? Since when can you only write about the up side of life? It's stupid.
Mark: Or when you read a review that says, "What does this band do for laughs, pull their own arms and legs off?" We weren't like that. We weren't depressing people.
JR: Your music was too beautiful to be depressing.
Mark: We didn't walk around being depressed all the time, but the music was real. It reflected what was happening around us. It was honest. That's all I can say really.
JR: I remember you saying that the Ritz was your favorite all-time gig, symtomatic of that whole tour, then? I'm glad I was there in that case.
Mark: Only because when I came off it was like walking on air. I've never been so high from a gig in me life. Let's face it, I'm no angel, I've done a lot of things but nothing's made me feel as high as that ever. I think all I had when I went on that night was a cup of coffee.
JR: You want another one?
Mark: (laughs) Yeah. Unless someone put something in it that I didn't know about.
JR: I doubt it, not at the Ritz. I have another question that can want for answering because I know you're good friends with the Mighty Lemon Drops and have been for sometime, right? After the U.S. tour including you and them, I read some six interviews they did, I know you're probably anticipating the question. (YEAAH JACK GET TO THE POINT!!!) Although I won't hold them responsible personally for the fact that there was zero Chameleons press compared to their six interviews, because that's the prerogative of the press, why is it that in just about every one of those interviews with Mighty Lemon Drops, first of all the Chameleons weren't mentioned in any of them, not by the writer or the band, and more to the point, in some of those, maybe three or four of them, it was intimated that the Lemon Drops sold out every date but one on the 25 date U.S. tour and that they really went over a storm, etc. and no mention of the Chameleons. Since you're a friend of theirs I figure you might be able to explain it to me.
Mark: Well, I can explain it in two words--Sur? and Simon. They are the managers and they're really crafty. When it comes to looking out for their acts and pushing their acts and getting them in the paper and doing what managers do, they're very, very good. You see what I'm saying? It's not down on the band, it's down on the management. The management knew the journalists that were writing the pieces, so that's why they did that. Dave Newton apologized to me because I met him at Rockfield and we had this out with him.
JR: So you were obviously aware of this?
Mark: Oh yeah. Reg was fuming, he was really angry.

JR: I can imagine.
Mark: I had it out with them, but I shouldn't have done it, it was a bit naughty. It was completely reverse situations, it was completely the wrong way around, the way they were writing it up. The other thing, I have to admit I was being really crafty, as I already explained my urgency to get back to America was pretty great, but the angle I was using with the others was the very fact that that could happen here, the press were treating us as if we were nothing. The reality of the situation was there we would have the New York Times hailing Strange Times as the most significant lp since Revolver, right? and the only press we could get here was the Middleton Guardian.
And I was saying to them,"What the fuck are we doing here? What are we wasting our time for?" The thing is, if we were going to try and establish ourselves in America, we're talking 18 months solid work. You're not going to do it from Middleton. Your're not going to establish yourself in America from here. You've got to be there, you've got to work. You've got to be seen.
JR: Gee, I wish you had. That's how U2 and REM did it, they played everywhere.
Mark: And everyone went, "Yeah, we agree." And I thought, "Sound. Ace." And I went away. Another complication with my little personal, well it wasn't little, it was major, personal problem was like I got involved with this girl from America but I was also involved with a girl here that I had been going out with for a very long time. And I had to tell her what was going down, you know what I mean? I felt like the biggest bastard that ever walked this earth. And to cap it all I'm saying we're going to America. She asked, "How long will you be in America?" I said, "I don't know, as long it takes." See what I mean, after 5 years or whatever, I've taken second place. It was like turning around and saying I'm going away and I might not be back for a very, very long time. Where does that leave me? See and that was something else that was going on.
JR: A spiderweb.
Mark: John did the same thing.
JR: To the girl he eventually married
Mark: No.
JR: Oh, he split up with her.
Mark: Finished it. John did the same thing. And Dave and Reg, after we had done that, turned around and changed their minds.
JR: Didn't want to tour America at all?
Mark: They didn't want to base themselves there for that amount of time it would take to do it. Admittedly, by that time Tony had died and that changed a lot. That did make a big difference. As the saying, the die was cast, we had already made the decision. And after that, it left me and John, well you know where it left me because I've been telling you about it for the last hour. But with John, BANG! he had been going out with her for ages and...he couldn't accept it so that's initially what made John leave. When John came in here he was telling me about it and he was saying, "You don't know what they think about you. I know exactly what they think about you." And he told me in no uncertain terms what Dave and Reg thought about me and that hurt me. To get back to your question...
JR: This is making my head spin.
Mark: Sorry about that.
JR: It's not your fault.
Mark: To get to your question, Dave was saying, "What am I going to do with me cats? (and all this kind of thing) I'm not going." So that changed everything really. As far as John went that was the last nail in the coffin lid. The press in America really got behind the group. I don't know, it's difficult to say because you've probably seen more of it that we have, but, on the whole, it was all positive, there was very little negative.
JR: I never saw a bad review.
Mark: I didn't see any negative ones.
JR: Not even in the fanzines.
Mark: There were certain points I agreed with Dave. He said,"What about our fans here?" And I said,"Yeah, but what about our fans in the States? What about our fans in Germany? Europe? France? Do they matter any less? What difference is it going to make? At least we can make headway instead of being treated like shit all the time and we'll come back to play here, we'll be coming back feeling good and feeling good about what we're doing instead of getting completely ignored." Working out, but for what? They wouldn't even print, if we sent in, press releases to say where we were playing or what was coming up. They wouldn't even print that. It doesn't cost anything to print that. Features, fuck features, they wouldn't even print the press releases! No one knew what was going on. We put a record out and no one knew it was coming out. The record companies do nothing. Warner did nothing. To Warner Bros. in London we were just some hick Northern band that the Americans had signed. They wouldn't do anything unless the Americans paid for it, authorized it or did it themselves.
JR: You used to go over to Holland and places like that and play 2-3,000 seat places, right? Pretty much similar to what I saw in America, too, you were selling out pretty huge venues.
Mark: We did alright.
JR: Every gig sold out except for Philadelphia on both tours. And even in England, most of your dates went pretty well, right?
Mark: All the time we broke our records at the international. There was no problem with that top? (unclear) That's what made it so flaming annoying!
JR: What about when the band first started happening? What with the tendency of the British press to bandwagonize, that is jump onto something new and write about it for awhile and then get off and start kicking. Was there any point when they threw this huge buzz around you as they have with so many other bands?
Mark: No, I don't think so. We didn't court them. As far as we were concerned, if they wanted to write about us, we wanted them to write about us because they would come to us, because they liked what we were doing. Not because we happened to go down there, brownnosing around the press offices.
JR: And you didn't feel like hiring somebody to do that for you like everyone else does?
Mark: We couldn't convince Geffen it was necessary. (mutters profanities) I wish the Chameleons could have worked with Mark Gates of Geffen because he was sound. As far as

getting the college radio level, he knew what he was doing completely.
JR: He was working with XTC recently, I spoke to him on the phone.
Mark: He's a very difficult man to communicate with, I find but I have total respect for the man and what he does. He's very good at his job and he loves music as well, and that's a rare commodity.
JR: Did you ever see Years, did they ever play gigs?
Mark: Yeah. I saw some really good ones, Cadmill's Act?? at Langley was the best one. It's this pub in Langley, an estate in Middleton. They played it a couple of times, but the first time I remember specifically. It was really exciting. I didn't really like...the drummer used to sing some of these songs. They used to sing songs like (Mark sings): "(unclear)all the guys look at me/ I'm just riding in my red Chevy. I didn't really like that sort of thing. Once Dave and Reg got going, it was a lot better. I've got a single actually.
JR: Yeah, I've been trying to get one for years.
Mark: It's not surprising, I mean, what salesmen. Everytime you would see Dave, he'd try to sell you a record. I had a dream one night of Dave carrying a cash till,(cashier machine?) like "ding!, there's another one sold!" and he was determined to sell a lot of them. I don't know if he actually ended up selling them all. I bought about three.
JR: He's a good salesman. That's like buying three sets of the same encyclopedia.
Mark: He is, he works hard.
JR: You've heard the Reegs new single?
Mark: Yeah, I have.
JR: That's Reg singing, isn't it?
Mark: Yes.
JR: What do you think of his vocals?
Mark: I think it's a great record. I think it's a good single. I always thought it was a good single.
JR: I wonder why he didn't do any backing vocals.
Mark: Well, he did on Strange Times.
JR: Really? Which songs?
Mark: "Childhood." That's John, Reg and me going, (Mark sings) "Just a little more heart now, just a little bit, come on..."
JR: I think your voice was mixed the higher of the three or something.
Mark: You can just about hear Reg because we do a little harmony where I go, "Come on" (high voice) and he goes, "Come on" (low voice). We mixed John down, forget it.
JR: A little off, was he?
Mark: Oh, it was a good laugh in the studio. We was recording the Sun and the Moon ep and John had one of those things that go, "Bom, bom, bom, bom, bom" what are those things called?
JR: A mouth organ, I think.
Mark: We're upstairs in the studio, right?, and they made this booth out of screens so you can't...and they put a big ? down in front of it so it's completely boxed off and you see this big ? on the floor, and out of the bottom of the ? you see this pair of two huge feet sticking out and you hear his mouth organ, "Bom, bom, bom, bom." (laughs hard) C.J. just couldn't get a take because we were absolutely on the floor holding our sides, holding our bladders, laughing our heads off at the sight of it because it just looked so funny. I suppose you had to be there really. What a bizarre situation to be in. If people who heard the record could see that, I mean that should be on a video.
JR: Did you ever make any videos?
Mark: No, I don't think we ever did. I was supposed to go to Warsaw in a month from now to make a film with a Polish director. He wanted to shoot a song and he wanted us to do a gig and stuff but the band dissolved. You know Gavin from James? the drummer? I met him a couple of weeks ago and I'm going to send him the songs I've been working on and if he wants to do it, I've got a drummer for the session, you see, and if I could pull it together in time for July, I might still go to Warsaw and film there. If I could get the people, this is it, you see. I have to go to the Job Center and put up a sign, vacancies.
JR: So those are going to be the people you are going to be working with at the beginning of your solo career?
Mark: I can't say because it's too early.
JR: That's who you intend to work with, let's say.
Mark: Mates, I just want mates. I suppose I haven't really got a lot left now. You see I didn't really have a lot of friends, I mean I hung out with a lot of people but I didn't really have mates and it wasn't really until I met Dave and Reg that I really had friends.
JR: You met them at a Years gig?
Mark: Actually right here down the road in Rochdale. I knew them at school. I knew they played in a group and stuff but I never saw them after leaving school. When I went to see the Fall down the road there they were there and they had gear but no where to practice and we had somewhere to practice but no gear. So we said they could come and rehearse in our hall, and when they went for a cup of tea, we jumped on, it was only me and Kenny, that's Ken Grant? I've fallen out with him as well. Everyone's leaving me.
JR: Move to America.
Mark: It's me, it's definitely me. It's me temperament.
JR: Too intense for people?
Mark: Me best friend is a teacher in Romley(?), what he did is he took Sally out for dinner one night and started asking if we were sleeping together and what the situation was and all this kind of thing and I freaked out, I absolutely freaked out. I'm saying, if you want to ask those sort of questions, ask me. Don't go taking my girlfriend out and pumping her, asking her what's up. You see, me and Dave weren't talking to each other and he was in the middle there and he was stirring up...and you see, I was engaged to

CHAMELEONS-STRANGE TIMES LP 1986

CHAMELEONS-FAN AND THE BELLOWS '81-'82 ARCHIVES



my girlfriend at the time, obviously we're not engaged anymore and everything, but we're still very good friends. We're really good friends. We go out, have a drink, or go for walks. It's really nice and she's got her own life now, a new job, a new boyfriend and all this. It's totally sound and civilized. And he'd come in and try and stir trouble. And he was me best friend. Why do people do this to me? What am I? Am I some sort of monster, that I make people do these things? ___? says it's not me but it makes me wonder.

JR: Everybody has problems with people they know.

Mark: I suppose so.

JR: Particularly as you get older.

Mark: See this is it. I had to get heavy with him and he couldn't take it. Now he had been my best friend from being a little boy, I would not have reacted the way I did if I did not have cause. That's what somebody else said to me, like "How could it get like that with you and Dave? or How could it get like that with you and Ken? I mean if I didn't have cause, it wouldn't happen. I wouldn't get like that with people I love a lot. When I love somebody, even if you fall out it doesn't mean I don't love them anymore. I love them just as much, do you know what I mean? I think when you love somebody you never stop loving them, no matter what they do. You might not be able to handle it. You might not be able to live with them anymore, you even might not be able to see them, it doesn't mean you don't love them anymore. 'Cause I think when you love somebody, it's forever. So when someone says, "You and Ken, how could it....? I say, "Look! at how close Ken and I have been all these years, do you honestly think that I thought that up if I didn't have a reason, if there wasn't a cause for it, for nothing? After all those years, I wouldn't do that. The guy was out of order, and all he had to say was, "Mark, I'm sorry I've upset you." That would have been it, because it only takes one, doesn't it?

JR: I've had some pretty damn incredible screaming matches with my best friends. It's not unusual. It's just whether you can patch them up later. Like you said, all it takes is one.

Mark: This is it. You've got to learn... because it's based on trust and if you don't feel that you can't trust, what is left?

JR: What I usually do is I go and decide that I'll go and apologize and say I was wrong even if I don't think I was. It's really fucking humiliating 'cause I'm still sitting there thinking, 'That fucking bastard, it's his fucking fault!'

Mark: I've done that before as well. The thing is if you trust somebody and that trust is betrayed, how is it ever going to be the same? Because you are never going to feel you can trust them anymore.

JR: You got to forgive people once in a while.

Mark: Oh yeah, forgive. But you'll never be as close again. I freaked out. I wrote him a letter. To be honest with you, Jack, the way I was feeling, if I had gone around there to see him before he went back I would have filled him in. That's the way I felt, I was so angry. So I thought I would write it in a letter. And I wrote this letter and it was a bit strong. Because if I hadn't been right, he would have phoned me up and he'd have said,"Hey wait a minute, this is Kenny, it's me, you can't say this to me! Come on, let's talk about it." But he didn't. He knew I had sussed him out. I don't go to his girlfriend and start asking her about their sex life. He can tell me, I'm his best friend.

JR: Here's a nice frivolous question: At the end of Strange Times, is that a reprise of "Soul in Isolation?"

Mark: It's a fade-out. Dave Allen just faded it in again at the end.

JR: So that's how the track actually ended when you recorded it straight through?

Mark: Yeah.

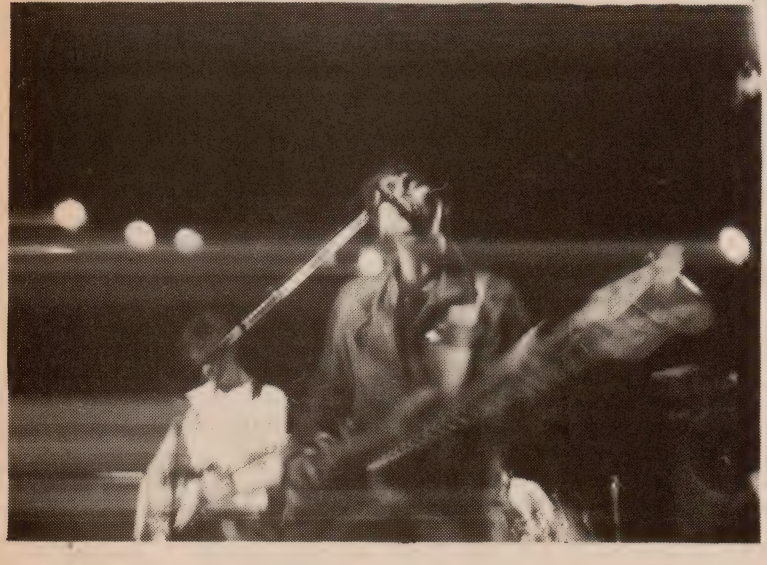
JR: That's funny. Bommmm!

Mark: I always do that. I play the bass like I'm (unclear) a hammer.

JR: Who's that talking on the beginning of your Sun and the Moon version of "Elected?"

Mark: It's an actor, from an episode of Prisoner called "Fall Out." It's a brilliant speech. It's really powerful. It's really weird. It's all on a surreal set, and you've got Parliament over there, represented by all these guys with white robes and black and white masks, like one-half white and one-half black, you've got all that over there. You've got elements of society in this one room, and he's the law and order, the establishment. He's dressed as an English judge with a hammer. And McGuen represents the rebel. Not the young rebel, but the educated, sophisticated member of society. He's an individual, he will not become a sheep to be herded. He won't be brainwashed by society and that's what McGuen represents. And there's another character who represents the rebelliousness of youth, sixties, basically. It was done in 1967. That series was an amazing piece of prophecy. It's dated a little bit, some of the music on the soundtrack is dated and the dialog, and the old spy routine and the fistfights, but essentially you are talking about a time when satellite surveillance was science-fiction, now it's a reality. Credit card systems were

MARK BURGESS (FRONT) AND DAVE FIELDING (BACK), THE CHAMELEONS AGAIN AT 9:30 CLUB, WASHINGTON D.C. EARLY 1987. PHOTO: DAVE MOORE



very rare at the time, in England anyway. All these elements since happened. And even Paul McGuen, he was acting instinctively, writing instinctively, didn't really know what he was doing. He had a nervous breakdown and had to leave the country. And everyone was going, "But he was number one!" because he didn't give him a good enough ending. Even he didn't understand what he was doing. It's only now that you look at it and you can see it's a piece of prophecy, the most entertaining piece of prophecy I've ever come across.
JR: What about in the middle of the song, is that still the same thing?
Mark: Yeah. That's a different episode, though. Each episode dealt with a different element of our society like elections, democracy, that was "Free For All." Education was in "The General." Loads of different angles were covered, and where society was heading. That was from "Free for All" that speech in the middle where they're trying to brainwash him into actually running for elections. It's great stuff.
JR: Who's the voice in "Peace in Our Time?"
Mark: That's it as well.
JR: Again it's the Prisoner? You're very fond of that show.
Mark: I was obsessed.
JR: I was guessing Neville Chamberlain, what with the song title.
Mark: Good guess. I actually misquote him. His actual words were "Peace for our time" not "Peace in our time."
JR: It doesn't sound as good.
Mark: I felt sorry for him. When I look at him as an historical figure, I feel so sorry for him.
JR: Who murdered John F. Kennedy? The CIA?
Mark: Had Kennedy lived, then Vietnam wouldn't have escalated.
JR: Even though he ostensibly started the American involvement in it.
Mark: But after the Bay of Pigs, there's no way he would have allowed that to go...there's no way...I don't think, it's only an opinion, I'm not professing to tell you anything. It's just an opinion. I don't believe that Vietnam would have happened had Kennedy lived. And I don't think a lot of other nasty things would have happened had he lived. The fact that he was considered to be weakening(?) on the civil rights (?) a lot of establishment America didn't like that, you know what I mean? The fact that he was actually starting dialog with Martin Luther King and saying "yeah, right, this has got to end." A lot of people didn't want to see that happen.
JR: A lot of different fronts. And we've never had a young president since.
Mark: Have you ever read any of Hansen(?) Wilson's stuff, The Eliminators? (JR: No.) You should read some of that. It's amazing. It's great in conspiracy theory. The Eliminators is a parody of the conspiracy theory. It's like every possible conspiracy you can imagine, they link everything just for a joke. Unfortunately, in the wake, everything started to turn up that they're actually right about a lot of things. It freaked him out.
JR: He was just having a lark?
Mark: It would take me hours to explain it because it's quite a complex thing. If you get a chance to read it, do so, but don't blame me because it's not very good for your health, it could really blow fuses.
JR: I've done a certain share of that kind of reading. All you have to do is read about Gulf + Western's activities in the Dominican Republic and it's enough to make you throw up. They control like 80% of the farmable land and use it to grow sugar for America in a country with a malnutrition rate of something like 72%.
Mark: Have you seen what's happening in this country since you've been here?
JR: What specifically are you referring to?
Mark: The relations between the U.K. and the U.S.S.R. You see, all these concessions Gorbachev's making in Europe are splitting NATO. So what the governments have done now is effectively sabotaged the progress that we've made in relationships with the U.S.S.R. They've tried to sabotage that.
JR: They prefer the antagonism.
Mark: Yeah, because we're still pushing for an effective nuclear deterent for Europe. Now if Gorbachev shows that such deterence are unwarranted in the face of the opposition, there's no argument. Their argument has been based on the massive superiority of conventional arms on the side of the Russians, right? And with the SS20's. So what's happened is, Gorbachev's making these massive concessions with joint troops in the thousands from the arena. And the British no longer have an argument for keeping nuclear weapons in Europe. So we're splitting NATO because half of NATO is saying, "Well, let's get rid of them, then." The pro-lobby, headed by Thatcher, is saying, "No, no, no, we can't get rid of them."
JR: The Germans, in particular, are anxious to get rid of them.
Mark: Very anxious. It's on their turf. What you've seen now is Geoffrey Howe and Mrs. Thatcher sabotaging the efforts and the progresses that have been made to revive the antagonism towards the U.S.S.R.
JR: Some of the American press is portraying "glasnost" as a complete fake, as a way to catch us napping.
Mark: I would not trust a politician as far as he could spit, whether he's left-wing, right-wing, center-forward, half-back, goal keeper, it doesn't matter to me. I don't trust any of them.
JR: That's basically what "Peace In Our Time" says.
Mark: Yeah, I suppose it is.
JR: I noticed throughout "The Speed of Life" and much of Strange Times that you seem somewhat, not necessarily obsessed, but interested in the passing of youth into maturity, if you will. By youth, I don't mean teenage years, but maybe even mid-twenties.
Mark: I'm proud to say, again I'm being a bit big-headed here, that within me and within Sally as well, all the good elements of child-likeness, not childishness. We've kept our childlike qualities, we've not had them conditioned out of us. We still are able to maintain that kind of view on things. I think things are deliberately over-complicated and over-complex in order to confuse people into going along with things that they really shouldn't be going along with. This is something that we really recognize in each other. And I think that's a good thing. A lot of the very old philosophies say that unless we can look at

life and look at the world as a child does we'll never evolve as the way we should be evolving. That's where the obsession comes from because I will never grow up. I refuse! I won't do it.
JR: I saw Carl Perkins a couple of weeks ago. His favorite expression is "Rock-n-roll keeps you young." And if you ever saw how good he is live, you'd believe it, for a guy who's like 56 years old. He seems like 22 to me when he's playing.
Mark: It's just one of the things about riding me bike that I really like. I've ridden a car, I've ridden a motorcycle, and I prefer riding a bike to any of that. Apart from the zen that's involved, I mean you really think, especially if you get out on an open road and there's not a lot of traffic, it's really good. It makes me feel like I used to feel when I was riding me bike as a kid. There's an element of freedom about it that is really getting harder and harder to come by.
JR: That's why I don't own a car.
Mark: I've got packs and bags on the side, I can get everything I need in there and me tent on the top, and I'm away, freedom! Doesn't cost me anything to run, doesn't pollute the atmosphere, it's perfect! It's got 18 gears. I could ride it on the side of this building.
JR: And it doesn't make it 80 degrees in May in London.
Mark: I was riding here, I tell you what, I know I was soaking when I came in, the worst thing is if you get your track suit wet so I carry these. As long as I can keep dry down here I'm alright. I was riding here, it was really warm, and the rain is coming down, and I was having a great time. I loved it!

POSTSCRIPT: A LETTER FROM MARK, DATED 10/24/89: Thanks for the copy of Big Takeover #26, it just keeps getting better and better, and the way you handled the article was great. Thank you. Your article has also saved me a lot of pen-pushing as now whenever I get letters asking about the split I just give them your address and suggest they read the article.

I tried to talk to **DAVE (FIELDING)** a while ago, inspired by a meeting I had with **ALAN DUFFY** who runs the Imaginary label (Dave's label with his new band, **THE REEGS**). I went round to his flat, but he wouldn't talk to me, so that is that. I don't intend to try again.

For myself, I've been having quite a time. I lived in Shetland for two months, playing in pubs; working on building sites and as a (illegible) man. Very interesting and often great fun. Made a lot of friends.

Spent some time touring round the Highlands, and I've just come back from Aberdeen, where I played a set backed by mates there who have a punk band called **TOXIC EFFECTS.** We played a mixture of **CHAMELEONS'** and **SUN AND THE MOON'** songs along with **KENNY** from **NEW MORNING.** They learned about 7 songs in 4 hours and I played some acoustic tunes too. Great fun and it went down a storm in a packed club. So I'm planning to do something similar with a bunch of Liverpool musicians, and everyone gets paid. It's great!

I'm due to start demos soon for the next "thing" so I should have plenty to do. I have to keep the dole off my back though.

In the meantime, take care and keep in touch. Much Love--**MARK BURGESS,** ROCHDALE, GR. MANCHESTER, UK (Funny enough, a friend of mine from New York who visited Dave recently, said Dave had mentioned the same incident to her, only he said that Mark showed up at 2 in the morning, and that's why he wouldn't let him in. Of course, this is none of our business, and it must have taken a lot of pride swallowing on Mark's part to make the trip whatever the time of day it was. But if it is at all possible that Dave would have admitted him had it been a decent hour, here's hoping that Mark will try again, if for no other reason than the resolve their conflict and bury the animosity. It's a shame, they are two great people, and they used to be friends. Perhaps more time has to go by, perhaps the memories are too strong, but all of their friends and fans think it's too bad the way things are, particularly as the lack of communication has canceled the planned Peel Session EP release, something everyone could benefit from (Dave and Mark could use the money if nothing else). Also, since a lot of those who wrote in asked what Mark would be doing now that Sun and The Moon have split, this should answer the question somewhat. It will be interesting to hear his solo recordings.--ed)

ANDY CLEGG OF SUN AND THE MOON; RE BURGESS INTERVIEW
Many thanks for sending me your magazine with the interview with **MARK.** I found it really fascinating. I saw the issue with the **MUSIC FOR ABORIGINES'** review and was very pleased with what you wrote about us. It was a bit of a shock to read a review of our single in a New York magazine. I was first surprised to see how you got hold of a copy in the first place as the single wasn't really promoted. I also liked the way you described the song, bass line, lyrics, etc. Thanks very much.

As to the interview with Mark, I've got a lot of strong feelings about some of the things he's said. Although he never actually said anything bad about me personally, I feel that I must put a few things straight or in other words how I saw things. I know that what I'll say is useless in the end and it won't affect the way people look at Mark or **THE CHAMELEONS**/Sun + Moon etc., but since I first met Mark/Chameleons etc. the experiences I've had knowing the band and watching, studying, trying to psychoanalyze everything that has happened has been fascinating for me. And it would have only been important for a band like Chameleons or even The Sun and The Moon, for the fact that they've become a band that could have been big.

I was only with The Chameleons for a couple of years. **JOHN LEVER** the drummer was in a band with me before he joined Chameleons. So I got to know them through him and watched them basically from the beginning. I loved their music and always looked up to them, and was even sort of proud because one of my friends was in the band. I didn't get to know them personally until I played keyboards for them on tours. But even then I didn't know what Mark and **DAVE FIELDING** were really like. I knew they could get very intense if they got wound up but I never took it that seriously because I still saw myself as an outsider and not as a proper member of the band. So it wasn't my problem. I could go on for ages, Jack, but it would just get boring but this is how I saw what happened with The Chameleons.

First of all they never had to struggle, one minute they were first writing songs together, the next minute they were signed to one of the biggest record companies in England for quite a lot of money and being looked at as a band that was going to be big. When something like that happens it has

to do something to your ego. They didn't really know anything about the music business and even though they had a manager, he was only a friend and basically they were trying to take something on that they didn't know anything about. I see this as their first big mistake. And after being kicked off the label they didn't trust anyone else ever since. Except for **TONY FLETCHER** who you could say they looked up to as a sort of father figure. When they eventually met Tony it looked like he was a sort of savior from all the mess they had been in and I believe they could have had that chance again.

The other thing which I believe was the cause of the problems was two very strong and intense personalities of Mark and Dave which got so bad, not only did they tell people who they didn't want to trust to "fuck off," i.e. Statik, Geffen "Harvey Lisberg," etc., their attitudes eventually split the band, i.e., they ended up hating each other.

I really did believe the Chameleons could have been big, but in the end I ask myself did they really want to, it seems that every chance they had and those chances could have been so easy that they basically turned the opposite way and now have become what I think they always wanted and that's a sort of legendary band. A sort of cult band like **THE VELVET UNDERGROUND** or **JOY DIVISION**, a band that could have been.

When eventually The Sun and The Moon got together, I knew, because of what The Chameleons were, we would always be compared to them, but I thought eventually we would get away from it, after a few records people would look at us as our band and music.

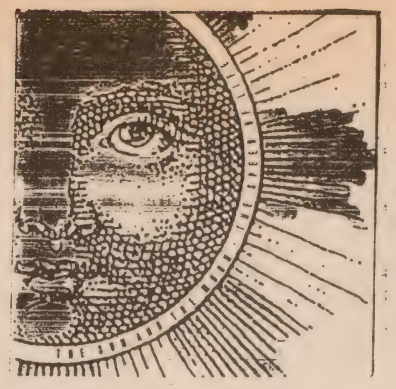
The other thing that we took on from Chameleons was a large debt from Geffen Records and their publisher which I knew would be a problem but again we'd eventually get over that.

We found a manager in a friend of ours called **ROB BROWN** who had a lot of experience in business matters and slowly but surely we got past the debts that the Chameleons had concurred and we even set up our own merchandise which we made enough money from to keep the band running.

In the end we had a perfect situation and as long as we kept costs to a minimum we were sure to start earning a living out of it and build from there. This was something The Chameleons had never had. They'd got themselves into debts with these companies and were stamping their feet when they couldn't get anything they wanted. I don't know if you know this but they spent $75,000 recording just "Swamp Thing," "Tears," "Paradiso," and "Inside Out" which is unbelievable Surely it is only common sense that will tell you, record companies don't give money away for nothing. A band has to sell records and the more you sell the more power you have.

The first 6 months of Sun and The Moon were great. It was exciting and I knew we had a good chance. But gradually more and more Mark wanted to be in charge and although it would take ages by explaining specific happenings, the rest of us gradually began to feel less and less important. In interviews Mark would mainly talk about Chameleons and all the troubles they had instead of talking about the positive things that were happening with us. In the end we didn't bother with interviews as we always ended up not getting a word in.

ANDY WHIT was the first to leave and I know he left because he felt his own individuality was getting shut off. We got another guitarist and began to write songs for the next album. This is



SUN + THE MOON-"THE SPEED OF LIFE" 1988

SUN + THE MOON-FINAL ALIVE NOT DEAD EP 1989

when Mark had learnt a few chords on acoustic and began to write his own stuff. When you're writing songs on acoustic you usually end up playing those folky type chords, and Mark had started writing these songs that were almost folk songs, and I didn't see how you could make these songs electric if you know what I mean. "Adam's Song" and "C'est La Vie" (from the final Alive Not Dead EP--ed) were the type of songs, and although they were good songs they weren't the type of things we wanted to get into.

Mark had got into this local buskers (people who play guitar and sing on the sidewalk or in the subway--ed) scene in Manchester and he wanted us to get involved by doing gigs and giving them the money. Andy Whit and I had busked for a living (very common in UK with the huge unemployment--ed) for four or five years and I didn't want anything to do with it. If Mark was into it then fair enough, but I think he was upset because we didn't want to be involved. It had all gone to far for John Lever the drummer and I think he'd had enough of his life being run by Mark's decisions, especially 8 years of it, so he left not to start a family as Mark said in your interview.

Also before John left, Mark got into wanting to play Chameleons' songs on stage on acoustic guitar while we went off. Which got embarrassing as people would come up to us and say "What's it like being in the Mark Burgess band."

The new guitarist (**AKY**, who was also on the Music For Aborigines 12" you reviewed) and I began writing new ideas for the 2nd album which I believed were better ideas than the 1st. Mark went to Scotland and we auditioned a new drummer, the drummer from Manchester band **JAMES**. We began rehearsing while Mark was in Scotland and basically getting ready to record the album. When Mark came back he said he couldn't come up with any ideas to ours. We'd also found out he'd sold all his bass gear and he said he wanted to play the guitar. This was getting very embarrassing as also we were asking for advances from Midnight Records to prepare ourselves for the album.

The manager had also set up new deals with Midnight and EMI publishers that weren't giving us lots of money but as much freedom as we wanted, enough so that we could eventually sign off the dole. So in the end, before we started borrowing money, the situation was going to get worse and we didn't want to get in debt so we called it a day.

I know that I haven't explained lots of things to make the picture even clearer, it would take another 10 pages but basically what happened is

Mark obviously hadn't gotten over The Chameleons and even though there is no chance of it getting back together he couldn't seem to get over it. We all felt we'd lost our individuality in The Sun and The Moon, we all felt like session musicians and we told him and he took offense to it. Lately he's been doing gigs on his own playing the Chameleons songs and his own stuff. Also, going off your interview he seems so be thriving off all the negative things and the "heavy shit" that has happened, most of the last interviews with Sun and The Moon were just about that. Would you believe John gave 8 years of his life to Mark just for Mark to turn around and say "Well, John was just the drummer."

I'd just like to clarify the fact, the songs "This Passionate Breed" and "House on Fire" were originally Andy Whit's and mine ideas not Mark's as he said in your interview. In fact, 99% of the first album were old Music For Aborigines ideas.

Anyway after all that Jack, I'm sorry if I've bored you but I feel I've got it off my chest now. The reason I wanted to tell you is because of the interview and you said it was one of the most interesting interviews you had done so I just wanted you to hear another version of it. As I said, I found it all fascinating for me because it's weird how you look up to your heroes as people do with the Chameleons and since I first met them and through the whole experience I find it difficult to listen to Chameleons' records now and have that same feeling I used to. Anyway, the best thing for me now is to forget it all and start totally fresh and one thing I've always said is the best band to be in is one with your best friends. There's no ego problems and you can have a good laugh and that's what being in a band should be about. Andy Whit and I are together again with John on drums and Aky on guitar. We've got new songs together some of which were going to be on the 2nd Sun and The Moon LP. We'll be hoping to play gigs here very soon. Also if you could possibly mention in your magazine if anybody wants a copy of the songs or the 12" single then write to my address and send me a blank cassette (C60, C90) and $2.50 p+p and I'll send back a copy.

One last thing I must say, thanks for reviewing the **XTC/DUKES OF STRATOSPHERE** stuff. It's great to see them getting recognition in the States. They get totally ignored over here. I mean, the first time I ever heard an XTC track was in a club in the States.

I think it's about time I went now before you start killing yourself. Keep in touch if you want. Many thanks, phew!--**ANDY CLEGG**, 103, HAZELHURST RD., ASHTON - UNDER - LYNE, LANCASTER, OL6 9BQ, ENGLAND, UK (wow, I thought I was the only one who wrote opuses. To be fair, what little we talked about Sun and The Moon was largely before the tape got turned on, and I have to say that Mark did mention several times that he was largely at fault for their split, and said more than once, and I thought he was just being self pitying but I guess he wasn't, that he now believed that he couldn't get along with people in bands. He was just too hard to deal with, which is why he thought the best thing to do was to begin a solo career backed by what few friends he had left, mostly from other bands he knew like Kenny from New Morning and his pals in **THE POPPINJAYS**. He also was candid about how the split was largely caused by him wanting to do his songs, and the others wanting to do theirs. Andy's assessment that Burgess never got over Chameleons also seems consistent with Mark's remarks in the interview that Chameleons were the best band, etc., and everything else he could do would never be as good. This seems a fundamental difference between and Andy and Mark; whereas it was Andy's pride and joy and first successful band, and a very exciting time, for Mark it was a 2nd go round, too close on the heels of Chameleons split. One thing Andy doesn't address is how Sun and The Moon more or less formed before Chameleons were officially over, the result of Andy's informal offer to write songs with Mark some time. It seems kind of unrealistic of Andy not to have had premonitions of this sort. In fact, the place I got the Music for Aborigines 12," which I like, was from Dave Fielding, who thus felt somewhat stabbed in the back by Andy, Andy Whit, and even John Lever, for in his opinion "stealing" 2 members of his band to start theirs. This is at the crux of the disagreement between Dave and Mark. According to the interview, Mark feels he told Reg he had quit, yet Dave and Reg say they found out by hearing about the Sun and The Moon's existence, which if true would make anyone severely bitter, particularly as Andy and Dave were friends from the Chameleons' tours, and Dave was out trying to help promote the little known Music For Aborigines 12" as evidenced by his giving a copy to me and other journalists he knew. It seems rather than having a proper meeting, Mark just fucked off on the Chameleons, during an incredibly traumatic period described in the interview, believing that Reg and Dave were aware that 1) John had quit, and thus, 2) he was quitting too. He says he told Reg this, but if so it didn't register. It was not artistic differences that split Chameleons, but personality clashes that ignited finally after a series of tragedies and disagreements. That Sun and The Moon sounded very very very much like Chameleons on the first album (great as it is, and it is a great album) is an indication that Mark (and maybe John) were trying to make the same music only under the peace they'd temporarily acquired by starting over with 2 other people. But, that was bound to only last a short while (6 months?), 'cause the basic problem was never solved. Perhaps Mark was trying to make Sun and The Moon sound like a different thing by adopting the more acoustic based sound of that last EP, which does not sound like a less special Chameleons, and perhaps when personality clashes also began in Sun and The Moon, as they must in all bands when it comes to working out the hundreds of disagreements, Mark became even more nostalgic for what he'd lost. If this letter proves anything, it's how truly like romances bands are. Just as Mark is broken hearted about how Chameleons ended and may never completely get over it, Andy writes like someone who just broke up with the girl of his dreams who didn't make him happy when he finally got her. That is real life; it is rare that discontented humans can ever live happily ever after without constant doubt and without unhappy sacrifice all the time. I'm sorry I never saw Sun and The Moon 'cause I played their records over and over, and their outtakes and alternate versions are particularly wonderful. Andy C and Andy W. are very talented songwriters, and they had just the right voice for their material, and now that too is gone. Again, though, in defense of Mark, I do feel he shouldered the brunt of the blame for the demise of both bands. He honestly communicated that he's a strong and stubborn personality and that that contributed greatly to the 2 splits. And it sounds like since Chameleons' quit he's been on a whirlwind, losing some of his touch with

reality, something it sounds like he's starting to get back now, particularly as he tried to slow down and right what was wrong. Also, I was surprised and unhappy with Mark's slighting of John's playing, but that's a typical prejudice that guitarists and bassists have about drummers, particularly since Chameleons went through 3 or 4 (or more) of them without any other lineup change, even Steve Diggle said he could always "Find someone to beat the skins." We drummers think that's a joke, and yes, I believe he's dead wrong there, drummers change the sound of a band immensely, but it's not an unusual insensitivity. I don't think he meant it personally, more creatively. In any case, I thank Andy for his revealing letter, and I wish him luck with his new (old) group, basically Sun and The Moon without Mark.--ed)

THE UNDERTONES/ THAT PETROL EMOTION

DAMIEN O'NEILL IN HIS FLAT, WITH THE GUITAR USED ON UNDERTONES DEBUT "TEENAGE KICKS" EP 11 YEARS AGO. PHOTO: JACK RABID

DAMIEN O'NEILL INTERVIEW, Part One (transcribed by **JON WELLS**)

Damien O'Neill was interviewed in the living room of his flat in S.E. London on May 20, 1989. Most of you know either one or both of the bands Damien has spent the last 12 years with, along with his brother **JOHN (SEAN)**. **THE UNDERTONES** were one of the best bands of the late 70's/early 80's, as evidenced by the continued interest in them five years after they quit. In '85, the O'Neill's resurfaced in another band that's turned out to be equally sucessful, the much different **THAT PETROL EMOTION.**

The Undertones formed in '77 or thereabouts in Derry, Northern Ireland, site of the infamous Bloody Sunday nearly two decades ago. Despite the political strife around them, Undertones wrote songs about girls, chocolate bars, and general teen angst, as reflected by their classic debut 4 song single "Teenage Kicks," released by the Good Vibrations label in Belfast in '78, the fourth release on one of the best punk labels of all time (though it seems Damien would disagree there). Soon thereafter they signed to Sire, who issued their first two albums both in Britain and in the U.S. In September '79, they came to America to promote their debut LP as support for **THE CLASH** (2nd US tour for Clash), opening shows that sometimes included **SAM AND DAVE**, as was the case at the two New York dates at the Palladium. While here they were guest DJs on the WPIX "Radio Radio" program. This was a memorable time, as that first self-titled LP is definitely one of the greatest pop-punk records of all time, certainly the heaviest sounding.

The lighter, happier 2nd LP Hypnotised did as well, with more top 40 UK singles, and their first US headlining tour, highlighted by two great NY shows at Irving Plaza and The Hotel Diplomat. The group left Sire for EMI, and released two more LPs. The Positive Touch lost their ballsy guitars, but still makes for a fine sugar-pop album. Which can't be said for the followup, The Sin of Pride, a good 1/2 of which is soul-less wank, much like singer **FEARGAL SHARKEY**'s solo career (after his 1st two good singles), the sound of a band breaking up. More NY gigs at Peppermint Lounge, though better than that last uninspired LP, confirmed the impression the band was in decline. They didn't even look as happy to be playing as previously. They quit soon thereafter. EMI rereleased the first EP with a boring new sleeve, as well as a singles LP (a and b sides) to mark their passing.

Late '85, and That Petrol Emotion releases their first single, "Keen" on the Pink label in London. Whereas the O'Neills had been the two guitarists in Undertones, in the new band Damien was on bass, with John and pal **RAYMONDE** on guitars. Another single followed, "V2," on their own label, and after signing to Demon, they released the best of their 3 albums to date, Manic Pop Thrill. The band made their U.S. debut at the Ritz in New York for the New Music Seminar. This great LP got them signed to Polydor, who issued their OK if not as pop based 2nd LP, Babble, and their first proper US tour commenced including another date at The Ritz.

Things soured with Polydor, so they moved to Virgin, where they released their most recent (and weakest, but OK) LP End of The Milenium Psychosis Blues, and another U.S. tour early this year (New York date: The World, the opening date on the tour). John left the band before this tour, and Damien has moved back to his old guitar position. Which brings us to this interview.

Damien was indeed having teenage kicks in the Undertones as he's still in his late 20's, and the most interesting thing about talking to him was that his memory is quite strong, he had strong responses to each inquiery, and best of all, had no aversion to discussing anything, no matter how much it might seem like old news. In fact, Damien said he was about the only one from Undertones who still likes to talk about those days.

As a postscript, however, we've received reports that Undertones attempted to reunite in November to perform at **JOHN PEEL**'s 50th birthday bash (old favorites like **THE FALL** and a supposedly drunken **PETE SHELLEY** performed), but John O'Neill couldn't make it at the last minute, due (conflicting reports here) to either illness or death in the family. We're told that they were surprised in rehearsal by how great it sounded, so maybe for old times sake they'll give it another try for us.

My thanks to Jon Wells for coming through with the transcription at the last minute, and remember there's a 2nd part of this 90 minute interview coming up next issue. Hope this leads a few of you to take out your old Undertones' singles or That Petrol Emotion records off the shelf. Music with zest and zeal (kinda like potato chips) and a real kick.

THAT V2 PETROL EMOTION

"KEEN" 1985" "V2" 1986

JR: I Guess we ought to start at the beginning. Actually, no, let's start at the end, that's always more fun. I guess we ought to talk about the announcement in the paper this week that your brother **SEAN**'s (aka **JOHN**) left the group?

DAMIEN: Well that's not even a press statement, it was just in the NME. I think it's because we were talking to **GAVIN MARTIN** a couple of weeks ago in a pub. It's basically made oficial that John's gone - he's left. For us we knew he was gone, basically he told us he was leaving the group one week into the recording of End of the Millenium, that's way way back, last August. He agreed to do the British Tour and then just around November his wife was gonna have a baby so we knew that was it after the British tour. We just told Virgin Records about two months ago that he had left the band as well.

JR: Wasn't there some possibility that he'd rejoin? I had heard that.

DAMIEN: Well, at the time I was thinking if John had written songs and if we really needed them we'd use them, but since then we've come up with what we really consider to be some really good stuff, so we really don't need him anymore. Plus he hasn't been writing songs. So, as for John's future prospects, at the moment he's working in a record shop in London (just off Camden Market - coincidently I ran into him there the next day!), and that's just to earn some money. He's selling his flat here and he's gonna move back to Ireland by September. He's got a daughter, a 4 year old daughter who's gonna start school. Apparently he's been offered a job over there to run a new studio that's been built. He's very lucky 'cause over there getting a job's incredibly hard.

JR: Did he quit because of the responsibilities of being a parent or did he just want to leave the band?

DAMIEN: Uh, mainly because of his daughter, and the new son. Actually, he never liked touring, he never did, even with The Undertones. He always missed his daughter, his wife. We even compromised. The 1st American tour we brought his wife and his daughter on the road. But that was hell. It was just too difficult. So yeah, mainly 'cause of the new baby, that's about all. The group, well, the last LP obviously didn't do nothing, it didn't sell, it was an abysmal failure.

JR: Commercially.

DAMIEN: Not musically, oh no, I still stick by that LP. I can see its faults. Its too diverse and all. There's some songs on it that shouldn't've been.

JR: For instance?

DAMIAN: Let's see, let me get the titles (reaches for copy of album). I'll rattle them off. There's only a couple I don't like. "Price of My Soul" was originally a demo, it was great. It's too chaotic on the LP, basically the production I suppose, there's nothing wrong with the song. I was never too keen on the funky ones, "Here it is, Take it" and "Groove Check."

JR: That's funny, 'cause you're still playing them!

DAMIEN: Not anymore, not gonna do them.

JR: I mean you were at the show at The World in New York a few months ago.

DAMIEN: Well, we had to really. 'Cause if we didn't do those two, there was hardly anything else from that LP we were doing on that tour.

JR: Why not "Cellophane" then?

DAMIEN: We dropped "Cellophane."

JR: Too bad. Best song on the LP, I think.

DAMIEN: It's too hard to play 'cause there's no accordian, and it's a slow song. The slow songs are always the hardest. All we did on the last tour were "Under The Sky," "Tension," every now and again we do "Sooner or Later," I think it was twice, that was it. The two funk ones, but even "Here it is Take it" got dropped near the end.

JR: I remember on those early **UNDERTONES'** tours, the press made a big deal about one of you being homesick all the time.

DAMIEN: Yeah, it was mainly John.

JR: Was it his wife, even 10 years ago?

DAMIEN: Yeah. John is a hard person to be on the road with as you can probably imagine.

JR: Well if he always wanted to go home,yeah.(laughs)

DAMIEN: It was worse then, in those Undertones days. It wasn't just him, it was the drummer **BILLY DOHERTY** as well. Never really had fun on tour, which is a shame, you know, instead of pursuing the fact they were in America.

JR: Aside from the 3 U.S. tours, where else did Undertones go?

DAMIEN: Did a lot of touring in Europe, festivals and three or four tours. And Scandanavia - We always seemed to be in Scandanavia for some stupid reason. We sold diddley squat up there. We never even made it to Japan or Australia! When Sin of Pride came out there was a proposed World tour all set up, this LP is going to be so big boys and shit, and of course it was all cancelled. And that's when we broke up, after that. I've never been to Japan, that's a place I'd love to go. Actually, Petrols are going to Russia, next June.

JR: Really?!! What are you playing Estonia, like Big Country and PIL did?

DAMIAN: Yeah, we're doing that festival in Estonia.

JR: They kept yelling "Johnny Rotten" when PIL played! He's big deal there!

DAMIAN: I don't know who else is playing. Obviously we're not, I don't think we're headlining. Perhaps we are, I'm not sure.

JR: Congratulations.

DAMIEN: Yeah. We were supposed to do it last year but we cancelled. I forgot why but it was a good reason because we wanted to go. Oh, I know, it was the time **RAYMONDE** got ill, he got really ill around the end of the British tour last year.

JR: Judging from what I read of PIL's gig, bring your own toilet paper!

DAMIEN: Yeah, I've heard bad reports. (laughs) It's gonna take 7 days to get back. Can you believe that! To do it and come back, a week! 'Cause we have to fly to Helsinki, stay overnight there, take the boat over the day before the festival, play the festival, then the same way back again. 7 fuckin' days!

JR: Guess that's your contribution to Glasnost. Umm, on this last US tour, though you didn't do them in New York, I understand you were doing

"Nothing Left" by **THE BUZZCOCKS** (from Love Bites) and "In a Rut" by **THE RUTS** (from their 1st single). You still have kind of a fond affection for that period and those bands.

DAMIAN: Yeah, of course. '78, '79 around that time, 'cause we were all growing up at that time, those were the records we listened to and they're still so fresh today. (YES!) Buzzcocks will always sound fresh (even when they come back!). The Ruts one was Raymonde's idea, he's a big Ruts' fan.

JR: One of my favorite bands of all time.

DAMIEN: "In a Rut" is a great song. A lot of people forget that Ruts existed. Buzzcocks survived, Undertones have survived.

JR: People are still buying the records!

DAMIEN: They still get played on the radio. Ruts, though, you never hear Ruts. You hear a **MEMBERS** record rather than Ruts, which is a shame, they're a better band.

JR: Members were fun, but yeah, Ruts were far better at much the same thing, with those reggae influences that show up occasionally in both.

DAMIEN: Ruts were one of the first to use that reggae rock thing, and **THE CLASH.** They did it in a good way. A lot of bands tried to do it as well but failed. Ruts did it good.

JR: That's 'cause they were such phenomenal musicians, no one else had their skill and chops. Which reminds me, which one of you is wearing **THE CHORDS'** t-shirt in the photo in Positive Touch?

DAMIEN: That's probably me. I was a good friend of **BILLY HASSETT** from The Chords. At the time I used to stay in his flat in London, yeah I got to know him really well. The Chords weren't a great band, really.

JR: They made great records.

DAMIAN: A couple of good singles.

JR: "Maybe Tomorrow!" "Somthing's Missing!"

DAMIAN: "Maybe Tomorrow" was the best. They even got Top of The Pops for that! But the rest of the group, apart from Billy, were dickheads. They let it get to them, just even having a top 30 hit. They really thought they were gonna take over from **THE JAM.** They really did. They were big headed, conceited assholes. Billy was great and then they sacked Billy, so I knew that was the end of them after that. They tried to get some singer and failed.

JR: I heard two of them had formed a band called **AGENT ORANGE** (not the US one), but I never heard anything after that.

DAMIEN: Yeah, **CHRIS** the guitar player.

JR: Chris Pope.

DAMIEN: Yeah. I never really liked him, he basically was not a great songwriter. Well that single was good. I knew it wasn't going to work, The Chords. Plus that mod thing they were part of, it was a crest of a wave. It all died out, because it was all just a fad really.

JR: Right. **SECRET AFFAIR, MERTON PARKAS,** etc.

DAMIEN: It died out after a year and groups like Merton Parkas and Chords all just died with it.

JR: There's actually a 12" in America that has a live version of That Petrol Emotion doing **CAN**'s "Mother Sky" with **HUGO LARGO** live. That was recorded here wasn't it?

DAMIEN: That was recorded here at the end of the British tour we did with them.

JR: How come they're not credited on the sleeve!

DAMIEN: I was just gonna say that. We were really pissed off about that because we told them to put it on!

JR: Well it's just a limited edition collectors 12" anyway.

DAMIEN: Still pissed off. They should at least be mentioned, 'cause it's great with **HAHN**'s violin and that's the whole song, it makes it basically. You know, it's a rough recording done from the desk.

JR: How many times did Hugo Largo join you on stage?

DAMIEN: Just twice, actually counting New York it's three. And **STEVE** our singer actually went on stage with **MIMI** to sing, uh, shit, halfway through the tour, what was it? A Hugo song, maybe **MICHAEL STIPE** co-wrote it.

JR: Oh, "Harpers?"

DAMIEN: Yeah, I guess that one.

JR: Yeah, **REM** were doing that on their recent tour.

DAMIEN: Yeah, I heard about that. So Steve did the part that Stipe did on the record.

JR: So you got along real well with Hugo Largo on your tour with them?

DAMIEN: Ah, they're great. Great band as well.

JR: You must have had fun talking to **TIM SOMMER** of the Hugos about all the same old bands from the late 70's and stuff.

DAMIEN: Tim's great. He's a bit intense at times, but...you know what he's like.

JR: Yeah. (laughs)

DAMIEN: But, really, I don't know if they're going to survive much longer. Tim was saying there's big differences between him and Mimi + **ADAM.**

JR: We'll have to censor that comment. Ye who transcribes this, can that part from the record (no longer necessary).

DAMIAN: They were over here recently, and Mimi's voice, she had larangitis or something. So that really fucked them up, their new LP. They got really good reviews over here, they got received really well. We did France with them as well.

JR: Supposedly their next LP is going to be produced by **BRIAN ENO** who's a big fan, signed them to his label Opal/WEA. I heard you were interested in having Eno produce your last LP.

DAMIAN: Yeah, that's a funny story. We're good friends with **DIEDRE O'DONOHUE,** who runs a radio station in L.A., she's really good friends with REM and people like that. We told her we were interested in getting Eno to produce us, so she sent the tape to Eno's office, with the Petrol's stuff we'd done before on side one of the tape. On the other side, she coincidently put on Hugo Largo's 1st LP.

JR: Who's idea was that!

DAMIEN: Uh, hers. Anyway, Eno heard the Petrols, didn't like us, loved Hugo Largo! (both laugh) When we heard that we were like, fuck!

JR: So you ended up with **ROLI** producing you again.

DAMIEN: Yeah, well, last year nobody wanted to produce us, nobody. We sent tapes off to loads

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"IT'S A GOOD THING" 1986

"A NATURAL KIND OF JOY" 1986

of people. **DON WAS, STEVE LILLYWHITE**, all these other big producers. They all flatly said no, so we basically ended up with Roli again, 'cause nobody else would do it!

JR: Did you try **JOHN BRAND**?

DAMIEN: Who?

JR: He did **AZTEC CAMERA**'s 1st LP, all the Ruts stuff, which is where I thought you'd know his work, plenty of other stuff, even some **CULT**.

DAMIEN: Never even thought of him.

JR: Well, keep him in mind. He's really good, if you want a real clear sound, or **JOHN LECKIE**.

DAMIEN: Leckie we used for "Genius Move," we recorded it with Roli and he remixed it. Made it more poppy. So the actual single version is Leckie's. Yeah, I like John Leckie, but I don't think he was mentioned again after.

JR: Were you not happy with his work?

DAMIEN: I think Raymonde wasn't, but I really liked it. I think it's better than Roli's version.

JR: He did a good job with the new **STONE ROSES** LP.

DAMIEN: Yeah? I don't like that group. Yeah, John Leckie's been around.

JR: He goes back to engineering for **THE BEATLES**. Not a bad recommendation.

DAMIEN: Definitely not. This LP though. I'll quickly tell you about this one. We met when we were in LA, **SCOTT LITT** (REM producer) and **MICHAEL BEINHORN** from **RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS**, they've both agreed to do the next LP. So now it's just a matter of ironing it out. I think we're going to use Scott Litt (a letter from Damien the next month confirmed this as fact).

JR: He has quite a reputation from REM's stuff.

DAMIEN: Yeah, well we love the production on Green. That's great.

JR: Yeah, it's their best record in years!

DAMIEN: But, it's always the group that writes the songs. If the songs are good, obviously the producer enhnaces that. And if they're bad songs, there's not much the producer can do. Scott Litt seems like the producer we'd like to use. We should know within weeks. Apparently he's available.

JR: How happy were you with your 1st LP producer, **HUGH JONES**. He's my favorite. (**BUNNYMEN, SOUND, SAINTS**, etc.)

DAMIEN: Great! Hugh Jones saved us basically. We probably might've broken up if it wasn't for Hugh.

JR: No kidding!

DAMIEN: We would've made the record, but I'm sure it wouldn't have been as good as it was. It all snowballed after Manic Pop Thrill, we got all this interest suddenly and signed up with a major. We were orignally going to do the record with a friend, **JEFFREY HERON**, who isn't the greatest producer in the world, he's just a friend basically. Hugh loved the band, saw us a few times. We signed to Demon, a one-off record. Hugh said he'd like to do it. We said, well, we can't give you much money. He said "fine, I want to do it anyway, I don't care." So he got 2,000 pounds advance, which is fuckoff, and a minimum amount of points. I can't remember and we went to Wales for a month, and recorded the whole thing in four weeks.

JR: How familiar are you with his other work, Bunnymen, Sound, Saints, etc.

DAMIEN: Yeah, Saints, and you see I knew him from **THE UNDERTONES**, he'd done "Beautiful Friend." Him and **DAVE BELL**, he was a beautiful friend. What I loved was his attitude, he just slagged off so many groups of that time. He was just a real music fan who didn't care about money. The worst thing about Hugh is that he had a fucking crappy manager who we had to deal with, but that's besides the point. Yeah, a lot of praise for Hugh. Since then though he hasn't really done anything (Jon says Dumptruck's last LP). The major record company attitude towards Hugh is like he's a second class producer or something.

JR: Maybe since he hasn't had any huge hits.

DAMIEN: That's why, which is really unfair.

JR: He hasn't worked with many hit bands to begin with, has he?

DAMIEN: No, but I've just got great memories of doing that LP. He's a workaholic as well. He's in the studio virtually 22 hours a day.

JR: Everyone raves about the engineering on his records. Does he do most of it?

DAMIEN: For our record he didn't. He had a guy in called **STUART**, who did a great job. However, before that he was always engineering and producing.

JR: So you liked Rockfield Studios?

DAMIEN: Yeah, we did End of The Millenium there too. It's a great studio. It's got a great drum room, you can get great guitar sounds. I must say Hugh captured the greatest guitar sound Petrols ever got, I think we haven't equalled since.

JR: Right from the first note.

DAMIEN: Yeah, fucking harsh - brilliant. I always asked Raymonde and John, can't we get that sound again, but they never could.

JR: It's nice that you credit the producer. Do you remember making your U.S. debut with Petrols at the seminar in New York?

DAMIEN: Oh yeah, can't forget that.

JR: Were you under the impression that that gig was open to the public before you came over, when in fact it was only open to seminar attendees?

DAMIEN: Yeah! We were actually told that people could get in, and of course it was a fiasco. It was all record company people!

JR: The only date on your first U.S. tour.

DAMIEN: We have this thing about playing New York, doing the worst shows and the stupidest things, or not doing 'em at all.

JR: Well the next Ritz show was good.

DAMIEN: Yeah, that was much better. That first time, why we didn't play Maxwells, before that or do interviews and shit. Instead we did this stupid wanky major company crap. I have to blame our manager there. I think he thought if we played the seminar and sold out it'd be a pretty big thing. Fuckin' crap.

JR: You've done 2 proper US tours since.

DAMIEN: We're glad we did the 2nd Ritz show. Even that wasn't that good though. I'm pissed off this last tour the first date was The World, we got much better later on. I'm pissed off we didn't do a 2nd show, again, later on, 'cause that would have

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"BIG DECISION" 1987 "SWAMP" 1987

been killer. Much better.

JR: I had heard from someone connected with Maxwells that you were going to play there when you came back around, what happened? Was it that your management wanted too much money?

DAMIEN: Probably, probably.

JR: So you don't really have control over that sort of decision.

DAMIEN: It gets out of hand, it really does. It's a typical thing where the agency is supposed to represent you for your own good. Getting as much money as possible. But sometimes to them it's all business.

JR: They can't see it as being a one-off gig just for fun and or publicity?

DAMIEN: No, agencies don't have this word fun - it's business. (Damien declined to elaborate on the record).

JR: Why have you already been on 5 labels? Or is that a stupid question?

DAMIEN: Well it started off, nobody wanted to sign us originally. We were supposed to sign to Creation. John and Raymonde got offered to do a single, that fell through. So we signed with Pink, just happened to meet friends of a friend, and they said they'd give us the money to do it. 400 quid or whatever, so that was the key there.

JR: That's the "Keen" 45. I love the b-side of that, real different, "Great Depression on a Slum Night," that's among your best I think.

DAMIEN: Yeah, good, I'm glad you said that 'cause Raymonde can't hear it. I think it's still one of the best, not the best recorded version. It's too slow, it should have been speeded up. It's a bit too depressing in a way. It's a great tune. Great guitar playing by Raymonde.

JR: Great chorus riff, too.

DAMIEN: Yeah, anyway that single, after that we got pissed off with Pink, they're a bunch of wankers. They were rippin' us off. So we kind of of learnt that all you need is 4 or 500 pounds and you could do it yourself. 'Cause at that time we didn't have any money. Actually all we got from Pink was 26 pounds! A check for 26 pounds. It sold like 7000.

JR: Hope you had a good dinner on that one.

DAMIEN: Oh yeah, we treated ourselves. We made money playing live at the time, so we did a one-off deal with Rough Trade to distribute our 2nd single "V2," on Noise Annoys Records (what do you know, a label named after a **BUZZCOCKS**' song), our own label. After that we asked different labels. Rough Trade actually expressed interest in signing, and we even went so far as meeting **GEOFF TRAVIS**, me and Steve. And he said "Yeah, we're going to sign you." We went into the studio and recorded a rough version of "Natural Kind of Joy," a much slower version. I think the story is that Travis heard that, hated it, and pulled out of the deal.

JR: Too Beatlesque for him?

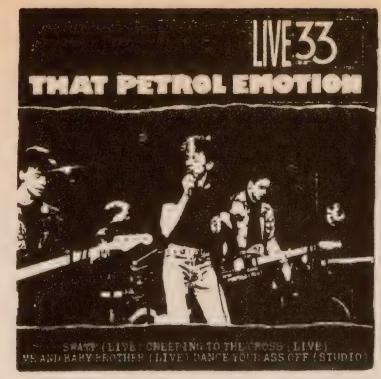
DAMIEN: Well, it's a rotten version. It's shit. It's actually got strings on it. It's not that good. So he pulled out and that left us in the lurch again. We were so pissed off 'cause nothing was happening. And then Demon came to the rescue and it was great. Perfect record company 'cause they just offered us a one-off deal, said to us quite honest "we're not really interested in singles, obviously we'll release them, but we're not gonna hype them, we're not going to spend any money on promotion," so we said fine. Just give us money to do the LP. So they gave us 12,000 pounds. $2000 went to Hugh and 10 went to recording.

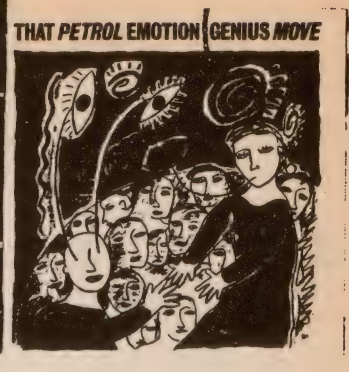
JR: That's what I call a shoestring budget.

DAMIEN: Yeah, and wouldn't you know it, it's my favorite record, done in 4 weeks. And it sounds fresh. You can tell the group's been playing for a whole year before that, so it's all live in the studio. It's a great record. There's a few dodgy things on it. "Cheapskate" should never've been on it, as there's better songs we left off for b-sides. It's a statement from the group at the time. And angry as well. Northern Ireland was much the focus. And that got received brilliantly, got great reviews. Sold about 30,000 which is very good for an independent, and then of course, phone calls from majors. By then it was getting crazy. We didn't have a manager at the time and we knew we needed one to get a deal. We wanted to sign to a major then, we wanted to make some money. We wanted to be more successful. There was no big discussion of whether we should sign to a major or not. It was all accepted, let's do it. Polydor wanted us, we got offers from London. WEA flatly refused, Virgin didn't want to know, ironically enough. Phonogram was the other major contender. So we went for Polydor, because their managing director was a genuine kind of guy and he personally wanted to sign us. There's a few good people at Polydor we liked and we knew we'd get a lot of freedom. Babble was done, much higher budget obviously. We wanted Roli mostly because we loved his work with **YOUNG GODS**. We wanted a harder sound for stuff like "Creeping to the Cross." That took about 6 to 7 weeks. There was a lot of remixing done. And Polydor didn't hear a single thing until we delivered the whole LP, finished. They came down once and didn't interfere. So give them credit, then. Everything was fine and rosy as it was released. "Big Decision" was almost a hit here, it got a lot of radio play. Things were lookin' kind of good. Babble got great reviews, however it didn't really sell. So it all went wrong after that, the managing director left the company, he went to manage **PAUL MCCARTNEY** or something, and the few odd people who liked us left as well. The people who replaced them were assholes, real assholes, especially the new managing director. So he called us in to a meeting one day, he treated us like schoolkids and he said, "Boys, you gotta write hit singles now, you know, concentrate on the markets" and all this crap. He even said, "no more politics, that's hurting you."

JR: They actually said that to your face, even though it was more your sleeves than your music that had the politics?

DAMIEN: Oh yeah, they didn't like it. I mean, they





"LIVE 33" EP 1987 "GENIUS MOVE" 1988

couldn't have forced us to drop it, but obviously, as far as they were concerned just mentioning it was bad enough. So we went out of that meeting thinking "Fuck, we're screwed now!" 'Cause originally Polydor said they'd let us develop, take as long as you want to. You'll be an LP band, not a singles band. Basically build it up like **THE CURE** have done which is fine. This guy was suddenly telling us that we had to have hit singles right away, otherwise, you know, "all the money you're spending here." Treating us like children. We had a big meeting with our manager, who also knew that guy was an asshole, and suddenly a couple of weeks later we discovered that there was a loophole in our contract and we could get out of it, which has happened before in the Undertones, same manager, **ANDY FERGUSSON.**

JR: When you left Sire after the 2nd LP?

DAMIEN: Yeah. Polydor made a worse mistake. They forgot to pick up our option, right? They forgot to sign the written documents saying legally they're picking up our option. The contract said they had to do that within a 2 month period. They forgot! Sire had forgotten to send us accounts, something much more trivial, that Andy used to get us out of that contract as well. So Andy has done it twice! With 2 major companies! Quite an achievement I think. Same lawyer as well, really good lawyer. So we got out of Polydor, we had a meeting with that asshole managing director, when he knew we were splitting, and he went apeshit! Actually at the start he was really nice, a suddenly completely different person. (Damien mimics him) "Boys, we could be a family, you could do what you want now." Total change of attitude. Next day we left!

JR: Have you ever seen the fil "Roaring Twenties," the one with **JAMES CAGNEY** and **HUMPHREY BOGART.**

DAMIEN: I think I may have, which is it?

JR: At the end Bogart's telling Cagney he's wasted, he ought to get out of his face, he's worthless, but then Cagney pulls a gun on him in a surprise, and now Bogart goes "Hey! We could be pals again, whadayasay! 50/50 just like old times!"

DAMIEN: FUCKING SHITS.

JR: But Cagney just shakes his head and goes, "Naw, I don't think sooo." And he pumps Bogart full of lead!

DAMIEN: I really wish I had a tape recorder. I was even going to bring a little SONY walkman 'cause I would've loved to have taped that conversation. His attitude as the end, 'cause he knew he was losing us. He was going to try to bribe us to stay by saying "You can have your own label, do what you want, sign other bands." And we wouldn't have anything more to do with him. Too late.

JR: Hope Virgin is being more supportive.

DAMIEN: Yeah. not so rosy now, well, no, it's OK I suppose. They've got every right to be nervous. They've spent a fortune on us, the last record cost a fortune.

JR: And sold worse than the others, right?

DAMIEN: Well, it sold more worldwide than Babble, because in America that suffered since we left Polydor when it came out. They obviously did no more work. End of the Millineum did better in the US. This time it cost 80,000 pounds to make, and Virgin spent a lot on promotion. However, criticize them as well, when the record came out, instead of sending an LP to all the journalists and people, they sent a fucking cassette with just the titles. This is to be reviewed. So they didn't even hear the record properly or see the sleeve notes, which is always important with us. I think Virgin was scared to do it 'cause of our politics on our sleeves. Our manager went crazy when he heard about this. It got mixed reviews here. Slagged off by Melody Maker, NME gave it a mixed review. It didn't do that well, we didn't have a hit single. I forgot to mention about "Genius Move" that was recorded during the Polydor days. We were going to stick it out as a single, but Polydor didn't want it, and "Groove Check" was actually supposed to be the b-side. (Jack laughs) Virgin actually bought "Genius Move" off Polydor for 5000 pounds. That got released before End of The Millenium. It sold nothing.

JR: Didn't know that.

DAMIEN: This is where the sinister forces take over. It's a perfect pop song, the most poppy thing we've ever done. It didn't get any daytime play on the radio.

JR: That's a very common complaint.

DAMIEN: Well, for us, it was the start of the radio ignoring us. "Cellophane" and "Groove Check" also got no play, I think it's the politics. Basically, what I'm trying to say is that in this country we're fucked for radio. We're never gonna get played again, pretty sure.

JR: How do you know that?

DAMIEN: You never know, but even **JOHN PEEL** doesn't like us anymore. We can't even get a session!

JR: He was instrumental in getting **UNDERTONES** heard in England, wasn't he?

DAMIEN: Oh yeah! The man is responsible for me probably even sitting talking to you now to be quite honest. When "Teenage Kicks" came out, the Undertones attitude at the end was "right we've made the record, that's what we've always wanted to do. See if it happens." There was no career in mind, nothing like that. And suddenly Peel was playing it on the radio and it snowballed. Calls from record companies and we were still playing The Casbah in Derry! (Immortalized on the 1st Undertones LP on "Casbah Rock.") It was crazy!

JR: Were you playing The Harp and The Pound back then, too?

DAMIEN: Yeah. We didn't play Belfast that much. Derry we always played. The Casbah and little dive bars, we basically got a following from Derry people. Belfast - see there's this thing about Derry and Belfast. Belfast ridicule anything that's not from Belfast. Same old capitol city mentality, though it's kind of worse over there. When we went to Belfast we weren't sure how we were gonna be received by people since we were from Derry! We went and played The Pound.

JR: Small little bar.

DAMIEN: Yeah. In fact, we were filmed at the pound club, and also at a place in Port Rush which is another city near Derry.

JR: Is that **JOHN DAVIS**?

DAMIEN: Yeah, Shellshock Rock. How did you know?

JR: I've seen it a few times in New York, Davis came over and did a few special screenings in 1980.

DAMIEN: Did you see it with Undertones in it?

JR: Yeah, I've heard you were cut out of it soon therafter.

DAMIEN: We weren't on the one I saw recently.

JR: I got lucky I guess.

DAMIEN: Well, I'll tell you the story briefly. We saw it. We were in London or something. It's a great film. For some fucking reason our manager persuaded us to get ourselves taken out of it. We thought it was a false impression of unity between the Catholics and Protestants in Belfast. We thought it was so stupid, at the time we thought we didn't want to be a part of it 'cause it's not true. Punk didn't bring Catholics and Protestants together.

Undertones were known to be a Catholic band whereas **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** were known to be a Protestant band. There was always that kind of polarized thing, even then. So we thought it's not true, let's get ourselves taken out.

JR: Maybe your manager didn't want you to be lumped in with **OUTCASTS** and bands like that.

DAMIEN: Oh, why not. I'm gonna ask him. I've got the scrapbook. There's actually an article in the paper with John Davis being so pissed off that we pulled out, you know, understandably.

JR: Well, you'd be the main attraction for his movie, along with SLF.

DAMIEN: I wish we were back in. I'm even thinkin' of callin' up and saying get us back in. But, it's probably too late it's 10 years ago.

JR: Was the same thinking used to force Good Vibrations to delete the "Teenage Kicks" single, the only single they deleted before they folded a few years later?

DAMIEN: That was because Sire bought the rights from **TERRY HOOLEY**, so he wasn't allowed to reprint it again. However he did, on the sly. We know that he printed like 10,000. Why not? Thing was, Sire ripped him off. Hooley is not a good businessman, never was, never will be.

JR: He's a bit of a drunk, too, isn't he?

DAMIEN: Yeah, you know you can swindle him by getting him steaming drunk or something. It's in the scrapbook. Again I was looking at it the other day. He sold the rights to "Teenage Kicks" for like 1000 pounds, and they promised him more money but never paid him. So there you go. I'm sure that's the story he'll tell his grandchildren.

JR: Who was the one who OKed the reissue of that in '83 as you broke up, with that ridiculous different sleeve.

DAMIEN: That must have been EMI, the label we were on after Sire, 'cause they bought the rights after that. You know, when we left Sire, not only did we leave the company but we left with the entire back catalog.

JR: I remember that, nobody else had ever done that before, right?

DAMIEN: Yeah, our manager should be in some music business book!

JR: Colonel Tom Parker Hall of Fame!

DAMIEN: Incredible. To this day I still don't know how we got away with it. Walked away with the whole catalog. So EMI released the single again, just to see if it could be a hit again. Stupid.

JR: Doesn't that reissue lose a little something in the translation without that graffiti you had a photo of on the original sleeve "The Undertones are shit - piss cunt wankers."

DAMIEN: Man, I hated the EMI cover. The black and white one. That's shit. That's a shitty cover.

JR: I never saw anyone else do that, telling people you're shit before they even buy the record!

DAMIEN: That was my idea. A friend photographed it for us. At the time there was a big thing. Undertones had great support, but we were ridiculed in Derry as well as Belfast. There were say only 100 people who really loved the band. Derry is a slow place, we were considered a freak. I remember walking down with straight jeans and a black jacket and tie and a white shirt and people would laugh at me 'cause I was wearing straight jeans. People still wore flares in 1977!

JR: I recall (both laugh).

DAMIEN: Over here it was a movement in a certain respect. In Derry we were ridiculed so much, people would write "Undertones are Shit" and not only that, another thing in the same park where that photo was taken, somebody had written "Undertones," a few weeks later somone changed it to "Hang the Undertones, Hang the Undertones."

FRONT AND BACK OF UNDERTONES 1978 DEBUT 7" EP "TEENAGE KICKS," SEE PHOTO OF GRAFFITI: "THE UNDERTONES ARE SHIT; PISS CUNT WANKERS"

JR: Hang the Undertones!

DAMIEN: "Cause we weren't serious music like **THIN LIZZY.**

JR: Yeah! And **HORSLIPS.** (both laugh)

DAMIEN: Yeah, Horslips. You know, we were playing this pop punk rock shit. We couldn't play, you know we weren't musicians. So we were fuckin' hit, especially by the local bands there that were doing the **DOOBIE BROTHERS.**

JR: It'll always be that way. People forget the Sex Pistols got knifed. **PAUL COOK** was almost killed.

DAMIEN: Yeah, Derry could have been Austin, Texas back then, same mentality.

JR: Where was it, Hammersmith tube? A bunch of teddy boys who hated punks?

DAMIEN: A stupid thing. The Teddy Boys. So, that's why we put that "Undertones are shit" thing.

JR: Here's a pointed question. I remember seeing Undertones play a little of **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS'** "Alternative Ulster" at one of your New York gigs.

DAMIEN: Undertones did "Alternative Ulster?"

JR: Yeah.

DAMIEN: No.

JR: I remember it well.

DAMIEN: No. You're serious, we didn't.

JR: Yeah, and you introduced it as "an Irish Folk Song," you didn't play the whole thing.

DAMIEN: No we didn't. We didn't do it. We wouldn't do that.

JR: Just for a -

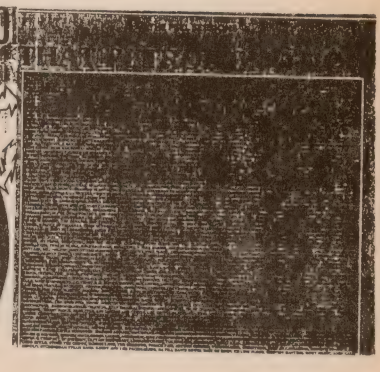
DAMIEN: We probably did the first few bars of it.

JR: Yeah, exactly.

DAMIEN: Oh yeah, I can remember doing that. Now it's coming back. It was at the old Peppermint

"GROOVE CHECK" PROMO 12" 1989

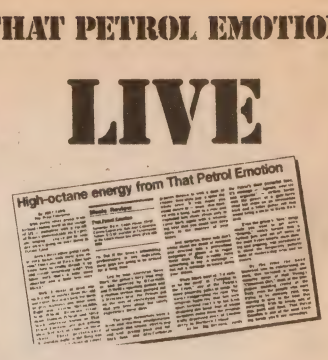
PEEL SESSIONS '87 EP, 1988



MANIC POP THRILL LP 1986

BABBLE LP 1987

END OF THE MILLENIUM PSYCHOSIS BLUES 1988



LIVE EP 1988

Lounge. OK, yeah, it was just as a joke, but we didn't do the song.

JR: Well what I mean is.

DAMIEN: Yeah, well we hated Stiff Little Fingers, and still do to this day.

JR: And they hated you?

DAMIEN: I think they did, well, yeah. They did "Teenage Kicks" as a joke, kinda thing.

JR: Right. That's why I figured you were just answering them back.

DAMIEN: That's different. They actually did it. They did the whole thing. They did it as encores all the time, I remember seeing them do it.

JR: (laughing) Feel like you'd been pissed on?

DAMIEN: Sort of, yeah. 'Cause it wasn't funny. There was no love between us.

JR: Some of the interviews I remember from back then you slagged them for being political.

DAMIEN: We were naive, stupid in a way, but mainly they weren't saying anything. An English journalist (**OGLIVIE**) was writing their lyrics for them, and they were saying "Gotta Get Away" and "Barbed Wire Love" and "Alternative Ulster" but they weren't talking about Northern Ireland, they were talking about people getting killed. **JAKE BURNS** then did some festival over here and said "The British Troops should be kept in Northern Ireland because they're keeping the peace." To us being Catholics from Northern Ireland, from Derry and witnessing all this shit, we knew they were a bunch of middle class student assholes. Which they were, except for **HENRY CLUNEY**, who's a fucking bigoted thug and still is. They were just dickheads. Jake Burns is a nice guy. I mean I saw SLF with their hair down to here doing Thin Lizzy covers. We knew what kind of group they were. We never treated them as being serious. So yeah, that's why we always slagged them off. I know they slag us too, I've seen recent interviews.

JR: To this very day. So here's that pointed question. You say you were naive then. But now it seems as if That Petrol Emotion is considered a politically concious band from Northern Ireland, whereas you always slagged SLF for being political while Undertones were writing about chocolate and girls.

DAMIEN: Well that's the thing; They never addressed the Irish question, to us they just became popular because of it. They were portrayed as these kids from war torn Belfast, they rode on the crest of that wave. We at the same time, I hate to say, got very sympathetic reviews when we didn't deserve them, because we were from Northern Ireland as well, from English journalists. They were giving us good reviews if the record was good or bad. I still think there was a bit of sympathy too, not just us, but **RUDI** and groups like that as well.

JR: **MOONDOGS** too.

DAMIEN: Moondogs who weren't really that good, but, so there was always that kind of thing. Undertones eventually became a band all the journalists and everyone loves. I don't know.

JR: I never saw many slags of Undertones, Buzzcocks, etc., pop-punk seemed to be liked by everyone when it was done really well.

DAMIEN: A lot of people hated **FEARGAL**'s voice, thought it was very irritating.

JR: Well, you do now.

DAMIEN: Some songs, oh yeah. Not at the start. I think at first he was great.

JR: I mean, his solo records now!

DAMIEN: ANNOYING! It's a shame. Oh, Feargal's a dickhead! You can quote me on that!!!!! (part two continued next time. Believe it or not, this is where the tape ended on side one. How's that for timing?)

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS INTERVIEW 6/24/89

It was an amusing shock to pick up NME in '87 to find that SLF had reunited, and were about to embark on a tour of England and their native Ireland. However, there were no U.S. dates listed and there didn't seem to be much chance of any, particularly when a 2nd series of dates (booked because of the

JAKE BURNS (L) AND HENRY CLUNEY (R, WITH BIG TAKEOVER, WHAT DO YOU KNOW?), IN FRONT OF CENTRAL PARK IN NEW YORK. PHOTO: JACK RABID

INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL LP 1979 | NOBODY'S HEROES LP (U.S. SLEEVE) 1980 | GO FOR IT LP 1981 | NOW THEN... LP '82

overwhelming sellouts of the first) were announced as their "final" dates. After that a few more "final" dates were added, and that seemed to be that. But lo and behold, here they were, not only back again, but doing a short East and West Coast tour of the U.S. Great!

Guitarist/singer **JAKE BURNS** and guitarist **HENRY CLUNEY** were interviewed in the bar of the Hotel Mayflower in New York. Although it would have been nice to do a longer interview like others that have appeared in this mag, SLF were very much in demand on this, their day off in New York before the tour's 1st show. This posed three obstacles. They had just finished doing a bunch of other interviews, and neither seemed too keen on doing another one, particularly with yet another scheduled in 45 minutes downtown at WNYU. I.E. neither were exactly ebullient as we sat down. Secondly, the lack of time (only 30 minutes) meant I couldn't follow up my questions as much as I'd liked, 'cause there was a lot of ground I wanted to cover. But they're fast talkers, so hopefully the coverage was adequate after all.

Thirdly, for some reason, even though I'd requested that Jake take part in the interview, unbeknownst to me, I'd been given Henry alone. Fortunately, as the interview was in the hotel bar, Jake merely tagged along to get a beer and read the newspaper while Henry and I chatted. Jake didn't get to read much of his paper; he gradually became more involved in the conversation as he began to realize this wasn't just some dumb interview with someone who was going to ask the same questions he'd heard all day. I'd been disappointed that I couldn't get both Henry and Jake. I'd remembered Henry as a talkative, friendly guy, but wanted Jake's thoughtful, articulate responses as well. I am pleased to say I ended up with both of them afterall, and I think Jake enjoyed the interview he had no intention to contribute to!

History? Formed '77 in Belfast, big punk rock fans. Same lineup as today, with Burns, Cluney and bassist **ALI MCMORDIE**, only with original drummer **BRIAN FALOON**, and managed by journalist **GORDON OGLIVIE** who helped out Jake when he was stuck for a lyric (many have been under the mistaken impression that Oglivie wrote all the lyrics). Released "Suspect Device" in '78 on their own Rigid Didgits label, which got a lot of airplay on **JOHN PEEL**'s show in London, prompting their signing to Rough Trade there. The 2nd single, "Alternative Ulster" was phenomenally successful, leading to several offers from major labels. They thought they had a deal with Island Records, who backed out after they'd made the verbal agreement, a bitter turn of events that prompted the angry song "Rough Trade" (this is about Island, not Rough Trade as many believe). Another label that rejected them was Chysalis Records.

The first album, an alltime punk classic Inflammable Material was released on Rough Trade in 1979 to more impressive sales, and sure enough, this time they were signed, to Chrysalis Records! Their contract was famous at the time, and it was even studied in music law classes in England, because it granted an unusually large degree of freedom for a "new artist" contract. This did not mean they never had problems with Chrysalis however!

The band moved to London and Brian Faloon left, replaced by **JIM REILLEY**. Faloon's sad departure is chronicled in "Wait and See," which was released on their 2nd LP (and first with Reilley) Nobody's Heros in 1980, their first US release on Chrysalis U.S. Unfortunately, the U.S. sleeve was greatly altered. The UK sleeve was the SLF logo in the form of a UPC symbol (!!!) and the back was Crysalis' rejection letter to SLF in '79! Neither artwork was deemed suitable for the new US market!

The band decided to tour America in October of 1980, with NY shows at Trax (US debut) and the Ritz on Holloween, so a live LP Hanx! was hurriedly put together so that US audiences would know some of the 1st LP material. This strategy backfired when Rough Trade US finally released the 1st LP here right after Chrysalis issued Hanx!, over a year and a half after its UK release. 1981 was the 3rd LP, the more toned down Go For It and another US tour, including NY dates at Irving Plaza and The old Peppermint Lounge. Jim Reilley then also hit the road (heading straight to New Orleans to join the SLF/Clash inspired, later awful commercial pop act **RED ROCKERS**), and his replacement was old friend (from his days in **TOM ROBINSON BAND**) **DOLPHIN TAYLOR.** A 4 song EP and an absolutely terrific pop album Now Then came out, alienating their longtime punk supporters. This failed to win support from either a new following or the usually hostile press, with the exception of a 5 star review in Sounds by **TIM SOMMER**, the only SLF review reprinted in the inner sleeve of SLF's later singles LP! For some reason, Now Then was not released here as the other 4 had been, though SLF did come to the US one final time for some great shows at the new (2nd) Peppermint Lounge. Dolphin Taylor being a ten times better drummer than Jim Reilley, these were the best SLF shows we ever saw. Lots of Now Then material too, which sadly disappeared on the current reunion tour!

Soon thereafter SLF called it quits, scattering in different directions. Jake formed **JAKE BURNS AND THE BIG WHEEL** and played London clubs, releasing 3 singles, one of which "On Fortune St." is quite

ALL THE BEST SINGLES LP, 1983

HANX! LIVE LP 1980

LIVE AND LOUD REUNION LIVE LP, 1988

SEE YOU UP THERE REUNION LIVE LP, 1989

good. Henry went back to Belfast, Dolphin took the drum slot of **SPEAR OF DESTINY** and Ali formed a despicable disco band **FRICTION GROOVE**, and released an LP on Atlantic which sold next to nothing. As a parting gesture, SLF released a double album of all their singles, a and b sides, called All The Best, which even includes the original 45s on the Rigid Didgits and Rough Trade labels in addition to all the Chysalis ones.

'87 began the reunions (Dolphin Taylor has been the drummer on all of these dates), and to date 2 live albums have already been released of this, '88's Live and Loud, which suffers from bad sound, and this year's See You Up There, their 1st great live album in three tries!

Which brings us up to this interview.

JR: Welcome back to New York

HENRY: Thanks. (No, he didn't say "hanx!")

JR: Haven't been here since that last 2nd Peppermint Lounge gig?

HENRY: Yeah, '82 or thereabouts.

JR: First question. Why was Now Then never released here? The only one that never came out here (though Rough Trade finally got around to releasing the 1st LP here after the 2nd LP was already domestic on Chrsalis).

JAKE: (laughs) I'm glad you're doing the interview and not me. It's probably 'cause it's the only album we thought would sell over here! (laughs again)

HENRY: Was it? I have no idea. I didn't know it wasn't! I don't know. I didn't know it wasn't! I'll have to find out why. The first album is being released on CD this month. If Now Then is gonna be released it'll be 6 months later. So we'll know by the end. But I didn't know that! Something you learn!

JR: Why don't you play songs off that last album on these reunion tours?

HENRY: We play one or two.

JR: Just the cover of "Love of The Common People."

HENRY: I don't know. When we got back together we just sort of put out a list of songs we hoped everyone would know. Almost 20. We were going to do a few off it, but there's no concrete reason why, just didn't want to.

JR: I thought that was your best record though!

HENRY: We always did too! Funny enough it didn't go down as well with the hardcore Fingers' fans. It was a bit different, a bit less punky say. But it's good to hear somebody say that, because we always thought, still do think it was our best one. It's the one we took the most trouble over.

JR: I remember Jake telling me and Tim Sommer that his favorite LP right then (in '82) was Imperial Bedroom by **ELVIS COSTELLO.**

JAKE: Probably was, yeah!

JR: Is it safe to say that making one of the 10 or 20 most classic punk albums of all time (Inflammable Material) was a millstone around your necks?

HENRY: (low voice) Yeah. The thing that happened was....When that album came out there was so much sort of over the top praise about it being such a great album. No matter what we did to follow it up, it was always going to be compared to that one, saying it's not as good. But that's the way it seemed with a lot of bands, they say the first one is great, and they don't like the 2nd as much. It was a bit annoying, but to be honest at the time it didn't really matter, getting such great reviews was brilliant in the first place.

JR: I thought that you had aspirations of being a pop band, but your fans, the press, and the industry wouldn't let you.

HENRY: Really it's only partly true. Really we just kinda write songs we enjoy. We never really sat down and said "This album will have to be much lighter," or "This album better be more complicated." It just sort of, if this is the right word, evolved that way. So if it sounds better that's great, but it wasn't planned.

JR: How much of the lack of acceptance of your Now Then sound and material contributed to your split, and how much is forgotten with this, and leading to this reunion?

HENRY: I think we weren't getting on at the time as people. Plus the album we thought was so great was rejected, that didn't help at the same time. We put this album out (Now Then) that we thought was great, a lot of people didn't accept it. It's easier now that we haven't been together for five years. We're not getting down each other's throats as much. So what you're saying is right, it all contributed in some way or another.

JR: And you've been teaching guitar since?

JAKE: You've done your homework haven't you!

JR: It's not homework!

HENRY: (shocked, at least that's what it says here on Greg's transcription!) Now and again! (ha ha) I play in a band back home, we all do different things. Better playing than not playing, you know?

JR: (To Jake) Is you're band **THE BIG WHEEL** dead?

JAKE: Hah! Yeah.

JR: And you are going to be a DJ now?

JAKE: Hah. No no no. I work for a radio station and I was a producer for a year.

JR: Too bad! I'm sure you'd be great.

JAKE: Thank you! Couldn't be much worse than some of the people I work for.

JR: So is this your third final farewell tour?

HENRY: Ha Ha Ha....! (uproarious laughter) Is that what number it is now?! Great!

JAKE: I lost count!

HENRY: The way we're working it is, if we want to

"SUSPECT DEVICE" 3/78 "ALTERNATIVE ULSTER" 10/78

"GOTTA GETTAWAY" 5/79 "STRAW DOGS" 9/79

play again, we can. There's no definite plans what we're going to do. If we want to play, come over again here in 6 months or a year we can, 'cause we're not under any record company pressure to do a tour, or promote an album. It may be the third final farewell tour, but someday you may be asking me if this is the 10th final farewell tour.

JR: That would be fine with me!

HENRY: Yeah! And us. If people want us, you know that's great.

JR: In fact you're playing twice as big places as you did when you were around!

HENRY: That's right, we've done better since we got back together than we ever have, which is surprising.

JAKE: Best career move we did was to take five years off! (laughs)

HENRY: We'll have to remember that. Record another album then (both together in unison) take another five years off! (both laugh)

JR: Well it beats doing bands like **FRICTION GROOVE** doesn't it!

JAKE: Is he here? Ali? He's slagging you off Ali!

HENRY: Anything beats it. Even Depeche Mode! It makes me sick!

JR: Any impetus to write new songs?

HENRY: It's not something we've sat down and talked about. It's just another one of those things that if we decide to do it we will. I don't think we'd find any problem in doing it. But at the moment we haven't written anything new so the set is just the old stuff.

JR: Besides the covers you've released, "Roots, Rockers, Radicals, and Reggae," "White Christmas," "Running Bear," "Love of the Common People," **BOB MARLEY**'s "Johnny Was," **THE SPECIALS**' "Doesn't Make it Alright" and done live like **ACE FREHLEY** of **KISS**'s "Back in The New York Groove," (which they did at the 2nd Pep. Lounge), what else have you done?

JAKE: Have we done "New York Grove?"

HENRY: I told you that the other night.

JAKE: I forgot that.

JR: You can do it again tomorrow night!

HENRY: No we're not. We're not going to say, but we've got a good silly cover for this place tomorrow night (Ritz, turned out to be their sendup of the **BEASTIE BOYS** "No Sleep 'til Belfast," see live LP)!

JAKE: The haitus is over!

HENRY: The silly cover we're doing is perfect for the Ritz, in fact it's the only place we're doing it here.

JR: Do you remember encoring with **THE UNDERTONES**' "Teenage Kicks" at the old (1st) Peppermint Lounge?

HENRY: If you say so.

JAKE: Well, we did do it, yeah.

HENRY: It's hard to remember what silly encore went with what tour, 'cause there were about 15 of them!

JAKE: There were a couple of times we were coming out to do the encore, and we're holding each other by the throat yelling, "What one? What one! What key is it in?! (laughs)

JR: The next time the Undertones played in New York they did a bit of the intro to your "Alternative Ulster."

HENRY: Well they probably couldn't learn the rest of it! (both laugh)

JR: The two of you (bands) never really got along too well did you?

HENRY: It was strange, they just decided they didn't like us. And we always used to say nice things about them.

JAKE: It was nice of them to try to rehash the rest of our catalog whenever they (uninteligible)

HENRY That's in the past anyway

JAKE: Yeah, we wouldn't get drawn into a slagging match now.

JR: How come you were about the only band from Ulster in general, and Belfast in particular who wasn't on **GOOD VIBRATIONS** Records.

JAKE: You never met (Good Vibes head) **TERRY HOOLEY** did you! (laughs)

JR: I talked to him on the phone when I was ordering his records from him air mail.

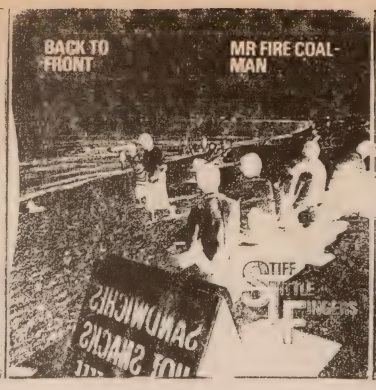
JAKE: Well that should answer your question!

HENRY: That whole organization (record store and then label too) was a bit strange. (Jake laughs) The bands made records and in about ten years they got 3 pounds royalties! He never really got it together. It was a good thing for Northern Ireland that he had this label. No matter that the bands didn't make it apart from The Undertones. It was a good thing for the area 'cause it meant that people had a reason to play. We were really at fault. About the same time we were about to put out our own record on our own label (Rigid Didgits) "Suspect Device," so we didn't need it.

JAKE: We didn't really want it either. Terry was never the most organized individual, and we already had our own organization built up. We decided very much from the start that we were going to be our own bosses, going to be our own people. And certainly if we were going to let anyone else get involved it wouldn't be anyone as chaotic as Terry Hooley.

JR: What happened to **JOHN DAVIS**? (Davis was the Belfast punk filmmaker, who did the two documentaries, Shellshock Rock on all the '79 bands including SLF, Undertones and Rudi, and the Outcasts' movie Self Concious Over You.)

HENRY: He's doing really well. He's producing a lot of TV films.



"AT THE EDGE" 2/80 "NOBODY'S HERO" 5/80 "BACK TO FRONT" 7/80 "JUST FADE AWAY" 3/81

JAKE: He won some photographer of the year award, didn't he?

HENRY: He won a documentary thing for a film about Route 66. Where he just went there, started at the beginning and went through all the towns. Still doing the same thing! (Route 66 is pretty punk rock!) It's good.

JR: Did he stop making documentaries on rock bands?

HENRY: Well, there's only the one, Shellshock Rock.

JAKE: I think he started and stopped with the same one!

JR: No he did that one on The Outcasts too.

HENRY: Oh yeah that's right. So he did. That was a bit...Shellshock Rock really caught how it was at that time in Belfast. And after that there wasn't anything!

JAKE: It really was that bad you know. Everyone says "Woah, it must have been really great" and it was, the feeling was, but the music itself wasn't really up to much at the time.

JR: Why are there two versions of that film, one with The Undertones and maybe you too cut out.

HENRY: Really? I know there was one with The Undertones and one without, but not without us. I have no idea. That's two no idea's.

JAKE: I think you know us better than we do.

JR: So is your famous contract with Chrysalis Records now expired?

JAKE: Yeah, it has. We've got much your average contract these days

JR: Why is there already two live albums of the new reunion faze (Live and Loud and See You Up There)?

JAKE: That was a mistake. It was naitivity on our part, should never have happened.

HENRY: The first one is semi-unofficial, sort of a bootleg. Just recorded straight off a gig with no mixing or anything done for it. We hadn't really planned then to do a real live album, so when we did for See You Up Here it meant that there were two live albums within a year of each other.

JR: The new one is obviously better.

BOTH: (chagrined) Far better, yeah.

JR: Who was the DJ you were lambasting on "You Can't Say Crap on the Radio" (b side of "Straw Dogs")

JAKE: Guy on a local radio station in Northern England. The story was **ALI** and I were doing an interview. This guy wasn't terribly sure who SLF were anyway, just that he heard that we were on tour and that we'd sold out the local major hall. He thought we were, I don't know, was the band SKY popular here? (no) Well they sound like **YES** sort of. Anyway, he asked me what I thought of the new **CLASH** album Sandanista, and I said I thought it was crap (with the exception of "Magnificent 7" I agree!). He suddenly slammed the mic down and put this record on, and he says "You can't say crap on the radio, we'll have the controller down." I said fair enough. It came to the end of the Sky track, sounding like Yes, and he says "And that was Sky, Ali, why do you reckon people like Sky then?" And Ali says "I think they're fucking shit!" (much laughter) That was it, we were banned from that station for like 5 years!

JR: Where was this, Manchester?

JAKE: No, it was Newcastle-Upon Thyme.

JR: You can actually understand them up there? (the dialect is quite a mumble)

JAKE: I live up there now....I have to understand them!

JR: I thought you lived in London, all of you except Henry.

JAKE: I used to.

JR: (to Henry) And you're the only one who moved back to Belfast?

HENRY: Yep. Only one all alone. I like it. (a pianist plays a quiet concerto in the background) Da da da dum. Ask him (piano player) if he knows "Suspect Device." (all laugh)

JR: I wouldn't be surprised if he played it.

JAKE: I would!

JR: You took the name of "Alternative Ulster" from the Belfast fanzine of the same name right? (put out by later and still current NME scribe **GAVIN MARTIN**, who's slagged SLF in that mag ever since!)

JAKE: Well what happened was he asked us to give him a track to put on a flexidisc to give away with the magazine, and he wanted us to give him "Suspect Device," and I wouldn't give it to him. I said we'll write you a song so we wrote it.

JR: And then he's spent a lifetime slagging you.

JAKE: Yep.

JR: What happened?

JAKE: Cause he's Gavin Martin really.

HENRY: Actually it was very strange 'cause it all seemed to happen very quickly. It came about one night when we were doing a gig in London. His best friend was working for Sounds, and basically he was being a bit of a pain so we kicked them out of the dressing room. And basically, ever since that day we never had a nice review from either of them. I'm not saying that's what happened, but it's a bit of a coincidence. One month in Alternative Ulster it says SLF are one of the best three live bands in Great Britain and the next month it says SLF have never made a good record or played a good gig. Fair enough. Don't think too many people are going to believe both could be true!

JR: Is **JOHN PEEL** interested in releasing a few more of your Peel Sessions? You were a big favorite of his. (In "You Can't Say Crap on the Radio," there's the lyric "Not even Uncle John will get

"SILVER LINING" 5/81 | R.E.P. 1.10 POUNDS OR LESS ("LISTEN") 1/82 | "TALKBACK" 4/82 | "BITS OF KIDS" 8/82

to play this song")

JAKE: That's down to Peely. Yeah, there's a possibility that they might string three of them together and release it as an album, three of the ones that haven't come out. Stuff that we're all worried about, we can't remember what they sound like, those sessions were all done in one afternoon.

HENRY: Funny enough that first session they released wasn't too bad, not as bad as I thought it was going to be.

JR: Are there many unreleased outtakes that you accumulated throughout your career?

JAKE: I don't think there's any, is there?

JR: Did you record everything you wrote?

JAKE: Well, not everything was recorded and released. There's an old version of "Revenge" recorded live somewhere, and there's a 16 track recording from Peppermint Lounge. (in New York) The last L.A. shows were also recorded, but not by us, so the only place you'll find those is the local friendly bootleg store.

JR: Well if you see one buy one for me (both laugh), the Pep gigs especially were good shows. What do you remember about your U.S. debut, here in New York at the Trax club uptown (October 17, 1980)?

JAKE: We were fucking tired. (laughs)

HENRY: The plane was late. We had to go straight from the airport to the gig.

JAKE: We got there a half hour before we were going on, no sound check or nothing, hired gear and everything!

JR: But that was a killer gig! (laughs)

HENRY: It was a great gig! But we were done in!

JAKE: We were told every day for three days straight that we were going tomorrow, so everyone was acting nice and going to bed early. Then when the third day came and they told us it was cancelled we said "Oh, fuck it." I went out with Jim (Reilley) and the two of us got absolutely, fucking paralytic in a club in London. We came stumbling home at 4 in the morning to find a message written on my bed, "You're going to New York tomorrow." God!

JR: Must have liked the Ritz show better (10/31/80)

HENRY: No, never really liked that place. Just the acoustics and the carpeted stage, it soaks up the energy you know.

JAKE: Peppermint Lounge was my favorite place to play.

JR: Which version?

JAKE: the first one, that was great.

JR: Funny, you played both of them.

JAKE: The first one was great.

JR: Funny, different location, but you play the Ritz tomorrow and that's moved too..

HENRY: Different time, different place.

JAKE: We always enjoyed playing New York though, more than any place in America.

JR: Why?

JAKE: I don't know. I like the people here. I like the attitude of the people here.

JR: You always sold tons of records here.

JAKE: I don't know about that but the people here are great you know. Everyone always says it's dangerous but everyone knows it is so you just don't go walking around at night without a care. Any time we've been here, we've never had a hassle.

HENRY: You've got to remember, we're coming from Belfast. (laughs)

JAKE: Everyone says Belfast is bad, but if you don't go to the wrong places it's not.

JR: How tiresome did it become being called the Irish **CLASH**?

HENRY: Like you just did! (all laugh) Never bothered us really 'cause we all liked the band.

JAKE: We took it as a compliment.

HENRY: People are gonna always say you sound like somebody. I remember when the Clash first started people said they sounded like The **ROLLING STONES.**

JAKE: Everyone said the **SEX PISTOLS** sounded like the **NEW YORK DOLLS** (more the Who, I'd say, though they did parody the Dolls' "Looking For a Kiss" and "Viatnamese Baby" on their "New York"). Ahh, fuck it. People are always trying to pigeon-hole bands.

JR: Were you going to see The Clash at that famous '77 Belfast gig that got cancelled at the Ulster Hall (The Clash reaped a PR bonanza by posing for pictures outside the hall they weren't being allowed to play, a page out of the **MALCOLM MCLAREN** book)?

JAKE: Yep, oh yeah. That was my first radio interview. The police were beating up the audience and I got stopped by a local radio interviewer who asked, "What do you think of all this?" I said it sucked. It was really embarrassing the next morning when I got up and heard me-self on the radio. Oh fuck you know. Had to go into work, it was great, "Did I hear you on the radio this morning?" "Well yeah." "I didn't think you were one of those punk rockers, punky-wavers."

JR: Did anyone at Caroline Records play you **NAKED RAYGUN**'s live version of "Suspect Device" yet?

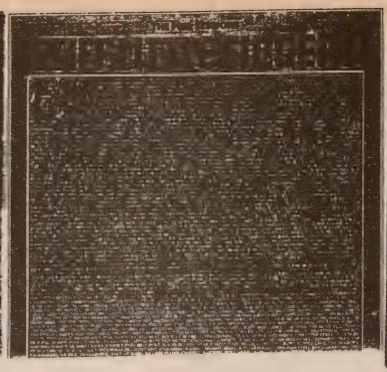
JAKE: Who? Didn't know someone had done a live version of it! (By the time they got to the West Coast they'd heard it, according to Ali's great interview in Ink Disease), There's also a Heavy Metal version of it. There's a Japanese version too! There's a Finnish version of "Wasted Life." Someone said there is a version of "Price of Admission" as well.

JR: Any others?

JAKE: Well there's **BARRY MANILOW**'s version of "Tin Soldiers." (laughter)

"THE PRICE OF ADMISSION" 4/83

THE WILD ROVER LIVE EP 1989 (3 FROM LIVE LP)



PEEL SESSIONS '77 EP, 1987

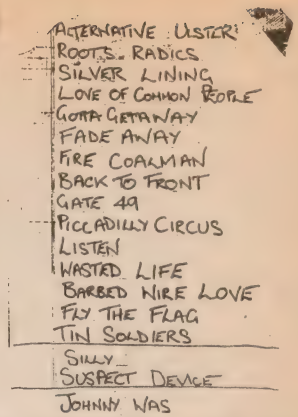
JAKE BURNS AND THE BIG WHEEL-"ON FORTUNE ST."

JR: I thought that was particularly good!
JAKE: Yeah, I thought so.
HENRY: **CROSBY STILLS AND NASH** doing "Here We Are Nowhere."
JR: What would you do if you heard a muzak version of one of your early songs?
HENRY: It would be brilliant.
JAKE: I'd love it. **SINATRA** doing "White Noise" would be great. (laughs)
JR: Someone put in a call to Hoboken! Hey Frank! Did a lot of people misunderstand "White Noise," think that it was racist since it took the perspective of one?
HENRY: Oh yeah! Where I live now, We got banned from Newcastle at one point for 4 years 'cause they thought we were fucking racists. That was just awful. We got loads of stick from that one. "Fly The Flag" we got loads of stick from too.
JR: It's sad that the public can't understand a common, effective technique like parody.
HENRY: Irony definitely goes above your average punter.
JR: Have you been too well received on these reunion tours?
JAKE: Can you be too well received? That's what happens when you go away, I keep reading we're "legends," no one called us that before! We're still the same four people we were five years ago, we're not "legendary!"
JR: That's what I'm getting at. I remember you saying that your old songs are as relevent in '89 as when you wrote them, do you think anyone's paying attention or are they just living a nostalgia trip through you?
JAKE: Umm. No, 'cause we have so many young kids seeing us for the first time, they must be paying attention. There'll be a few old croakers like yourself standing in the back having a smile when they see us fall over. We're getting all of it.
JR: Now that the Harp and The Pound and The Trident (in Bangor, just outside Belfast) Clubs have been deceased for years, will you change the lyrics in "Alternative Ulster?" (note: Naked Raygun didn't!)
JAKE: Ha! The fucking Trident! The fucking Trident was only around one gig and that was us!
JR: You opened and closed the place.
JAKE: Fucking right! I mean The Pound was always fucking forget it, you know?
HENRY: Well the Pound is all "Sweet Home Alabama" and "Freebird."
JAKE: It's closed now, but you know, the lyric is "The Pound's so old it's a pity" 'cause there were blokes in bands even younger than us playing ten year old **VAN MORRISON** songs. It wasn't on you know, it was just, so boring.
JR: What do you think of **U2** being a world wide phenomenon, while the bands they stole from, **SLF** and especially **THE SKIDS** are completely unknown in comparison.
HENRY: It doesn't really matter, 'cause we always liked U2. I bought their first record.
JAKE: They were friends of ours at the start. It's nice to see your friends do well. (According to Ali's interview in Ink Disease, U2 used to cover SLF in early gigs, a fact I wasn't aware of when doing this interview!)
HENRY: What I don't like now is this attitude that they're really big now so they must be really awful. OK a lot of people don't like them but a lot of people tend not to like them because of their size.
JAKE: I still think Joshua Tree was the best thing they did.
JR: I liked everything until Rattle and Hum.
JAKE: There's still some good stuff on that, the **B.B. KING** track is great. The thing about U2 is, at least with the live stuff on that, there's loads of live stuff, they're trying new things with that, they're still doing stuff that they want to do and there is still a lot of emotion in there, there's a lot of heart in there. They haven't done anything that's worth knocking yet. (disagree there) They even managed to make a rock film without coming across as a bunch of pretentious wankers (disagree there too). That's a pretty fucking difficult thing to do. OK it's not the best movie you'll see, but there's so much worse,..... have you ever seen **LED ZEPPELIN**'s The Song Remains The Same? (My pal Mitch tortured me with that one bad night). Other bands who get to that height start to believe their own hype, maybe they do too, but not to the extent that other people do. I wasn't even supposed to do this interview (Henry laughs)!
JR: What's your favorite records now?
HENRY: **TIN MACHINE.**
JR: **DAVID BOWIE**, huh?
JAKE: That's hard rock, isn't it? Haven't heard it. What's my favorite album of the moment? Green by **R.E.M.**
JR: (agreed on REM!) We've got to wrap this thing up 'cause you're due downtown at WNYU.
JAKE: Yeah, we're only 15 minutes late now, the way we're running today!
JR: Anything to say in closing?
JAKE: Yeah, you pick up the tab for the beers! (laughter)
HENRY: No, glad to be here and glad people are still interested in us after all these years.
JAKE: It's really nice, you know we came up to Russell (tour manager) yesterday. I don't care, we got up this morning and he said, "Right, you've got interviews all day today." We thought, (moans) "aw shit, the only off day in New York." But the

JAKE BURNS AND BIG WHEEL-"SHE GREW UP"

JAKE BURNS AND THE BIG WHEEL-"BREATHLESS"

BACK SLEEVE OF FRICTION GROOVE LP ALI M. ON FAR RIGHT


ALTERNATIVE USTER
ROOTS, RADICS
SILVER LINING
LOVE OF COMMON PEOPLE
GOTTA GETAWAY
FADE AWAY
FIRE COALMAN
BACK TO FRONT
GATE 49
PICCADILLY CIRCUS
LISTEN
WASTED LIFE
BARBED WIRE LOVE
FLY THE FLAG
TIN SOLDIERS
SILLY
SUSPECT DEVICE
JOHNNY WAS

SLF SET LIST, RITZ NYC, 6/23/89

nice thing is that everybody who's interviewed us has said "Aw, it's fucking great to see you back again!" So now we're starting to get really cheered up. It's fucking good to be here, it really is.

JR: Now a lot of people who saw you in the old days are still coming back.

JAKE: Yeah, it's good to see them everywhere you've been.

JR: How about you, Henry. A final question I ask almost everyone I interview is, Do you remember from **ALTERNATIVE TV**'s first album The Image Has Cracked, that song called "Alternatives" (To NATO)? If you were standing on a soap box, what would you say to people?

HENRY: Yes, I remember that LP. I don't know, that's a hard thing to say. The worst thing people do is not listen to what other people are saying. They don't really understand it, as we were talking about earlier ("White Noise" and "Fly the Flag"). I wouldn't like to be on a soapbox!

JAKE: I'd rather be on the radio.

JR: No last pearls of wisdom?

JAKE: For a person who wasn't participating in this interview, I had a lot to say!

(Thank you very much!)

NAKED RAYGUN

NAKED RAYGUN INTERVIEW (7/17/89, Sidewalk Cafe, NYC): This interview took place after sound check on the night of guitarist **JOHN HAGGERTY**'s final ever show with Naked Raygun. The air was heavy with uncertainty, as the remaining three members remained unconvinced that Haggerty was indeed walking, even though he'd made it plain he was. This was a New Music Seminar gig, but they already had a small East Coast tour booked commencing in three weeks, including two more New York appearances. Nobody was sure what was going to transpire in the next 21 days.

About 1/4 of this interview appeared in edited fashion in Rockpool, so if it sounds vaguely familiar, keep reading. Naked Raygun are often interviewed in the fanzine press, and with their goofy sense of humor, the conversations are always funny. Due to the preponderence of interviews, we decided to keep this one moderatly short, rather than do a giant opus and cover a lot of the same ground they've probably grown tired of. The band even comments on this decision near the end of the interview.

Chicago's Naked Raygun have survived since the start of this decade. Their recording career begins with the documentary 1981 Chicago live compilation LP Busted at Oz on Autumn Records (Which also featured the still going **EFFIGIES**, and **STRIKE UNDER**, who contributed members to the current Naked Raygun as well as **BLOODSPORT** and the late **BREAKING CIRCUS**), and the '82 EP Basement Screams on Ruthless Records, an Effigies/Big Black run label. Singer **JEFF PEZZATI** is the only remaining member of this original N.R., which also featured Jeff's brother **MARCO** and later **BIG BLACK/ARSENAL** guitarist **SANTIAGO DURANGO.** The current lineup began to form 'round '83 with Haggerty on guitar, **CAMILLO** on bass, and **ERIC SPICER** on drums. Another single came out, the "Flammable Solid" EP (these first 3 records are the ones most sought after by NR fans), and the group made their New York debut at Great Gildersleeves in the summer of '83. After more such visits, the band signed to Homestead for an entire LP including "Flammable Solid"s 3 tracks, Throb Throb in '85. '86 saw **PIERRE KEZDY** replace Camillo and their best LP to date All Rise, which was lavishly praised by enlightened New York Times' critic **ROBERT PALMER** (not the pop star), and more touring. In '87 they left Homestead for their own label Sandpounder for their wonderful "Vanilla Blue" single, and soon after signed to Caroline Records when they discovered what hard work it was to run a label in addition to a band. '88 was Jettison and their first European tour.

Now suddenly it's '89, they've been around nine years, and they're just now being noticed by U.S. commercial radio, behind their new 12" single "Treason" and their new 4th LP Understand? The timing is right; the smashing "Treason" is probably the greatest recording of their long career. It combines the sinister edge of their more unusual post-punk material (like All Rise's "Peacemaker") and their more straightfoward Buzzcocks inspired, adrenalin wall of guitar and drum fills pop (like Throb Throb's "I Don't Know.") It's electrifying hearing "Treason" blasting amidst Camouflage, Depeche Mode, Howard Jones, and the rest of the glossy techodance music that often dominates the more adventurous commercial stations. After a decade of having been mistakenly neatly filed away in the punk rock/underground bin, they're starting to emerge from that planned obsolescence, subculture obscurity ghetto.

Bad time thus for Haggerty to split, but that's his decision. He's been replaced since (in time for that tour) by **BILL STEVENS** (ex-**PRODUCT 19**), and NR marches on. They're even getting some major label interest these days.

present: NR, Manager Karen Bemis + Mitch Friedland & Jack Rabid

JR: Well we already know what the first question is going to be.

JEFF: Uh Oh!

ERIC: Aw, c'mon Jack.

JR: It wouldn't be much of an interview if I didn't ask it. What will you do for a guitarist since tonight is your last show with John Haggerty. After

all you do have NY dates listed in the paper four weeks from today. And why is John leaving?
KAREN: Is it confirmed that he's leaving?
JR: I've heard from several sources that he is. Is this true?
ERIC: That's what I thought.
JEFF: That's what we're to understand.
PIERRE: Of course there may be some new developments.
KAREN: He may be re-auditioning. (all laugh) (waitress informs band that both Bud on tap and Becks Dark on tap are flat. All groan)
ERIC: I don't think you want the waitress on tape.
JR: That's alright, it's atmosphere. Once again, assuming John is leaving, why is he leaving?
PIERRE: What is this? You know the answer to that, Jack.
JR: I'm just the humble reporter here.
PIERRE: Artistic and philosophical differences.
JEFF: Don't think things were working out the way he had planned. I'm not saying what he had planned.
ERIC: His big picture may have been overexposed or underexposed. Scratched negatives maybe.
JEFF: May have been dust in the camera.
PIERRE: It was John's idea to leave. We didn't push him out or anything. He wasn't quite happy with the way things are. I think he thinks he can do better on his own or something. Which is for him to decide.
JR: So what about these Maxwells and Cat Club dates in 28 days?
JEFF: We'll be there....We'll be there with guitar player in hand.
JR: Today on WNYU you mentioned that your big thrill of late was when ex-**Buzzcocks' Steve Diggle** joined you onstage at your gig in London in May. Want to tell us about what that was like?
JEFF: (all laugh) Shit Jack, you were there!
JR: Hey! I'm doing the interview, and you answer the questions. You vill answer!
ERIC: That was a big thrill!
JEFF: Just to meet him!
ERIC: Just to have my picture taken with him. Of which someone told me he would be sending me photos!
JR: You'll get them, you'll get them! (shee!)
ERIC: It was a thrill, it was a dream come true.
JEFF: It's amazing how much he forgot of those songs in a short amount of time. Since he stopped playing them.
ERIC: It's amazing how drunk he got in an hour!
JR: On your free beer! (all laugh)
JEFF: No, that was great. That was a gas!
PIERRE: Especially coming over from the U.S., and throwing an Englishman in front of Englishmen. They hate that!
JEFF: They really hate that.
JR: Did any of you see the review in the British press slagging you off for that show?
ERIC: No, what did they say?
JEFF: I don't read the British press. I use it for toilet paper.
ERIC: I line my cat box with it.
MITCH: They didn't say anything good.
KAREN: What did they say?
JEFF: It's really a shock!
MITCH: Basically they said...they compared Jeff to **RICHARD JOBSON.**
ERIC: Who?
JR: The **SKIDS** old lead singer, later in **AMOURY SHOW.**
ERIC: Ah.
MITCH: Because you both wear plaid pants.
ERIC: Oh, the pants thing, the pants thing.
JR: Said you looked like a golfer.
PIERRE: That was very observant of them to pick that up.
JEFF: When you sit in the back row, that's about all you can notice.
JR: The meat of their criticism was that you were playing tired old punk rock and trotting out tired old warhorses. (much laughter) Last year you had **CHARLIE HARPER** up there, this year Diggle.
JEFF: Next year we're going to dig up **SID VICIOUS,** and prop him onstage on a post. Whatever is left of him.
PIERRE: Imagine what comments he'll get on his clothes when he gets up there.
JR: What did you think of that gig, anyway, in general.
ERIC: Good.
JEFF: We played badly.
PIERRE: The crowd was good. We didn't play well in London last time, we didn't play well in London this time.
ERIC: We played that tired old punk rock..
PIERRE: England is sort of weird. We go over there, and we're not huge or anything like that, but the people who come to see us are fans of ours. They come to see us 'cause they like us, regardless of what the press says, which everyone forgets what they say in two weeks anyway. The English press will not deter us, they will not break us or keep us from playing there.
JR: One thing I noticed was that 95% of the audience, from their dress, were punks. Whereas the gigs I've seen you do in New York, the percentage was minute. Is New York an aberration, or what? What is your audience these days, across the world.
JEFF: There's hardly any punks left in New York City, Jack, they're all from the outerlying areas. You know that. Aren't they all from Connecticut now?
JR: Who is it who comes to see you on your various tours then? Who makes up your audience in 1989?
ALL: It's always different. Whoever comes. Whoever pays to get in.
PIERRE: It is different over there. I think in Europe, like in Germany and like Switzerland there's

NAKED RAYGUN WITH BUZZCOCK STEVE DIGGLE (CENTER) AND BROTHER PHILLIP DIGGLE, THE AVANT GARDE ARTIST WHO PAINTED BACKDROP FOR BUZZCOCKS '89 REUNION TOUR 6 MONTHS LATER. THIS IS AFTER NAKED RAYGUN GIG AT UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, 5/19/89. ALL SMILES, HUH? PHOTO:JACK RABID

still a lot of people who are still politically oriented in their thinking anyway, and they tend to stay punks a lot longer because of that. There seems to be a lot of punks there, whereas in the US, it was more of like a fashion thing than any political statement, so there's a big difference there. Whereas in America it's mostly college students, and people who are open to what isn't being played on the radio.

JR: Interesting since you're just starting to get a lot of commercial airplay now for "Treason." I hear it here on WDRE. You were up for "Screamer of the Week." It does seem like you're poised finally to make a big indent on the people outside of the underground music subculture.

PIERRE: Why do you think that is? Do you think the music is beginning to leave the subculture, or the subculture is not being subculture anymore?

JR: I told you, I ask the questions here!

PIERRE: We don't have that kind of perspective on our music, we just write and play it.

JEFF: I'm having a harder and harder time discerning between the subculture and the other people. For me the distinction is becoming blurred.

ERIC: I think because of perserverance we're finally spilling over.

PIERRE: In Europe maybe they think we just play tired old punk music, in which case it would be hard to spill over there.

JR: That's what I mean, maybe it's only now that people here are recognizing that you're not just a retro '77 wanna be band, that you're music extends way beyond the self-imposed boundries created within these sometimes "tired" subcultures.

ERIC: If you walk by a dog everday and it always bites you in the ass, sooner or later you're going to notice it.

JR: Thank you Eric.....Pierre, why don't you tell us about your recording with ex-**BIG BLACK** guitarist **SANTIAGO DURANGO.**

JEFF: I'm not. I'm not recording with Santiago.

JR: Funny, you don't look like Pierre.

PIERRE: I'm just helping him out with some stuff. That's it really.

JR: I hear you're recording a couple of your (Pierre's) old songs from **STRIKE UNDER** and **TRIAL BY FIRE.**

PIERRE: Well, We are doing that, yeah. Those are songs we worked on a long time ago anyway.

ERIC: Mr. Grapevine.

KAREN: Jack knows all.

PIERRE: I seem to work well with Santiago, writing stuff, on and off together. It fills in my gaps, I fill in his gaps.

ERIC: It's illegal in Georgia, you know.

JR: Do you do any more work with **PAILHEAD**, Eric?

PIERRE: I just did that one single, that was it.

JR: What else happened on your European tour? Every band has a European tour story.

JEFF: Van broke down.

ERIC: Windshield shattered. Brakes went out when we were on the Alps. Engine died. Other than that nothing!

PIERRE: Tell him about the wasp.

ERIC: John got attacked by a wasp! I got a photograph of it! (general laughter)

JEFF: Don't try to do laundry in France.

JR: Why not?

JEFF: We went to the Atlantic Ocean in France and it wasn't there. It was just seaweed.

PIERRE: France is different. Our shows went OK, we just didn't sync up with the French environment all that well.

JEFF: Couldn't get into the same groove.

MITCH: You couldn't get into them or vice versa?

PIERRE: No they liked us fine, we just have problems. Last year our van broke down in France, and this year our van broke down in France twice.

JR: Three's a charm!

MITCH: Did they use you (Pierre) as an interpreter?

PIERRE: A little. That was really wild, trying to speak French automechanics with these guys.

JR: Any really strange gigs?

PIERRE: We played this cellar in Switzerland.

JEFF: Our Geneva gig got cancelled, we got a call from a friend who said he could get us a show there, and since we were driving through, why don't we play. We said OK. That was one of our best shows on the tour, the place had no floor, just dirt in this cellar. That was the club, stone walls, really small.

JR: Weren't you worried about electrocution? Was there water around?

JEFF: There was water all over the floor. Everyone had mud up to their knees when it was over. But we had a little stage to stand on.

PIERRE: It tilted like 30 degrees to one side.

JEFF: To keep the water off it!

JR: Is it true that when you play shows at The Metro in Chicago, you play cartoons before you go on?

JEFF: Always.

JR: Which ones, Warner Brothers?

PIERRE: Sometimes, or you go to K Mart where they have tapes for kids, one tape for 3 bucks or like 4 tapes for 10. They have really old ones from the 30s.

MITCH: Who's idea was that?

ERIC: Pierre's! (all crack up). Pierre's an authority on cartoons!

JEFF: Piere's in charge of cartoons.

JR: Do you have Porky in Do-Do land?

JEFF: No

PIERRE: I'm not big on Porky, I'm big on Daffy Duck.

JR: That's the amazing surreal one, though, **SALVADORE DALI**'s work was used for that.

PIERRE: Wow!

JEFF: Which one's that?

JR: The one where Porky is going after the last remaining do-do, worth millions of dollars.

JEFF: I have seen that.

JR: Do you play the sound too, or just flash 'em to what the DJ plays?

PIERRE: No, the sound too. They just got a video system there, it's really good.

JR: Why don't you bring them on tour with you!

PIERRE: The most popular one was the one with Elmer Fudd with the flea on the dog's back. Crowd was going crazy.

JEFF: They love those cartoons.

JR: Anyone attend that **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** reunion tour?

JEFF: Oh yeah we saw the Chicago show (all sneer, since SLF in fact skipped Chicago).

ERIC: They always skip Chicago.

JEFF: Stiff Little Fingers has never played in Chicago. They always skip it. Never ever.

JR: I interviewed **JAKE BURNS** and I asked him what he thought of your version of "Suspect Device" on Jettison. He said he'd never heard of you, and you're on the same label as him!

JEFF: Caroline Records did play it for them, I guess after you spoke to them. They liked it but they thought it was very fast.

MITCH: The way they play it now, your version is really fast!

JR: We've seen you do a lot of covers like that around here. Can you name every single cover you've ever played live? Or is the list too long.

ERIC: **BUZZCOCKS** "Ever Fallen in Love," "Harmony in my Head," "I Don't Mind," "Love Battery," some

BASEMENT SCREAMS EP 12" 1982

FLAMMABLE SOLID 7" EP 1983

THROB THROB LP 1985

ALL RISE LP 1986

of which you've played with us, "Lipstick," "Fiction Romance" we did once...

JR: I get the feeling you like those guys....

PIERRE: No, hate 'em...We did **STIFF LITTLE FINGERS** "Suspect Device" and "Alternative Ulster."

JEFF: **EFFIGIES** songs, "Mob Clash," "Below the Drop," **STRIKE UNDER**'s "Elephant's Graveyard," **STRANGLERS** "Bring on The Nubiles," we've done "Free for All" and "Highway Star," and "Only you can Rock me Rock me," **UFO**, **LED ZEPPELIN** "Houses of The Holy," **GOVERNMENT ISSUE**'s "Where You Live." (This turned out to be the last song they ever played with Haggerty, later that evening in his farewell performance). **KILLING JOKE** "The Wait," **GANG OF FOUR** "Armalite Rifle."

JR: This Chicago AIDS benefit you did with nine other bands. What did you play for that.

JEFF: Eric, what did we do?

ERIC: I don't know. I slept. I missed it.

JEFF: We used (**BLOODSPORT/EFFIGIES** drummer, John's brother) **JOE HAGGERTY.** The idea was to go on stage and play one of your own songs and then one of the next band's songs. So the next band up was **THE DEFOLIANTS**, so we did "Art is Dangerous" by them.

JR: Then all kinds of people from the different bands went up there and played covers?

JEFF: It got really late and I had to work the next day, I left. Pierre played....

PIERRE: A **GERMS** song. What was it?.....

JR: "Land of Treason?"

PIERRE: Yes! With **CHRIS BJORKLAND** (of Bloodsport and Effigies) I played "Psyche" by Killing Joke, Rob from Defoliants played guitar with me on "Land of Treason." Somebody was supposed to do the drums for that Germs song, but he didn't show. This drummer in this other band said he'd do it but he never heard the song before. So I took him out to my car to play him a tape of it, the guy listens to it once, and goes out there and plays it practically perfectly!

ERIC: Wow! Not an easy song either!

JR: This was at the Exit club? (yes) Who puts these together, this is the 2nd year in a row.

JEFF: Usually Chris Bjorkland does it, he calls us the day before. Yeah!

PIERRE: It's great, it's fun for us and makes money for a worthy cause.

JR: Whose idea was that b-side to "Vanilla Blue," with all those **SLIM PICKENS** monologues?

JEFF: All of ours. Pierre wrote a song called "Whiskey," which just has that one word in it, "Whiskey." We decided to do a western song and Slim needs to be commemorated.

JR: How did you get a hold of the recordings?

JEFF: We wrote Warner Brothers and asked if we could use them.

PIERRE: They were very helpful, they said just send us the tape and we'll splice it all together for you. Got it exactly right. (long pause as band inspects interviewer's incredulous expression) We just took it off video tapes we had.

JR: I know a b.s. story when I hear one.

ERIC: **MEL BROOKS** actually came into the studio and mixed it for us.

JEFF: Mel Brooks said I've got some outtakes never before used that you could have.

PIERRE: Then he thanked us for using them.

JEFF: Mrs. Pickens showed up at the release party to sign records.

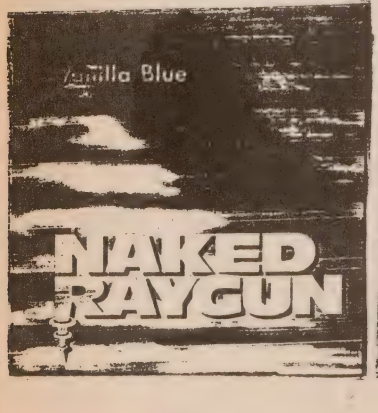
MITCH: Any of you going to see **THE WHO**?

JEFF: I wouldn't mind, but it's at Alpine Valley.

ERIC: Shitty place.

JEFF: Outdoors, pretty ugly place. Three days.

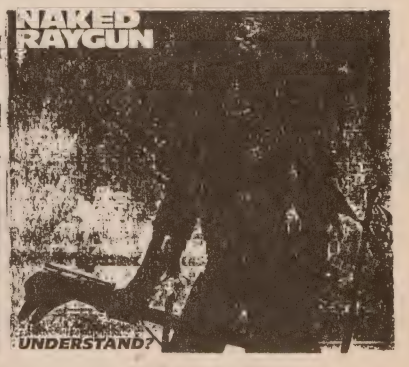
PIERRE: I saw The Who 5 years ago on their last



"VANILLA BLUE" 7" 1987

JETTISON LP 1988

"TREASON" 12" 1989



UNDERSTAND LP 1989

supposed farewell tour, their sound was really terrible there too, this big cement box they were playing (Rosemont?). Then **PETE TOWNSEND** had his guitar real low to save his hearing, all you could hear was drums and bass.
ERIC: What's wrong with that?
JEFF: They just put him through the mains, that's really weird. I read that article, he's playing only acoustic now. Why doesn't he just put his amp in front of him and point it at the crowd?
JR: Is your days of working with **IAIN BURGESS** over, are you gravitating away from him?
JEFF: No. We've just been trying something else.
JR: Anyone hear the **MEGA CITY 4** LP he just produced.
JOHN: (who's just sat down) Yeah, I heard it. It's really good. I was surprised.
PIERRE: That guy in France was raving about them.
JOHN: Yeah, they're good!
JR: A lot of people compare them to The Buzzcocks as well.
JEFF: Someone played me their records, they sounded good. Maybe even more "retro" than us!
JR: How many records do you sell these days.
PIERRE: Somewhere between 15,000 and 50,000.
JR: That's narrowing it down! (To John) Since you weren't here before when I asked this, why are you leaving the band if you are?
JOHN: I figured one Spinal Tap on the earth was enough.
JR: Care to elaborate?
JOHN: No.
JR: No?
JOHN: No. (silence)
JR: Any final words, anything you want those reading this interview to know?
ERIC: That's a pretty damn short interview....coming from you! (hey folks, Tolstoy wrote more than just War and Peace!-ed)
JR: I see! So you want one of my special "history of Naked Raygun" 3 hour interviews huh?
ERIC: You've spoiled us.
JEFF: It all started in a shack in Chicago.
JR: I mean, if you're really insistent on that sort of treatment, we could spend a half hour talking about what Santiago brought to Naked Raygun, or Jeff's brother Marco, or what Camillo is doing now..
JEFF: What Camillo does in the summer is try to overhaul his humidifier for the winter months. He's cleaning it right now, decalcifying it right now.
JR: How often do you find people who think you're a new band, and how much does that bother you, does it amuse you?
JEFF: Everyday. It doesn't bother us at all.
ERIC: It amuses me.
JOHN: It doesn't bother me at all, 'cause I'm really sick of that history thing like you were saying, going over all the ancient archeology...
JR: Archeology! (laughs) "Here lies the tracks of the Santiago Durango man, believed to have existed prior to the ice age..."
JOHN: They unearthed Santiago's original telecaster somewhere near Sheffield I hear.
JR: Saw it at The Museum of Natural Rock History.
JEFF: It only had three strings, and he probably kept saying, "I'm sure I can just play with these."
JR: Nothing to add?
PIERRE: I don't know about this guy Jack Rabid.
ERIC: Bring me the head of Jack Rabid.
JEFF: This guy Jack Rabid, he looks like this guy in DeKalb, Il (a reference to Greg Dunlap of This Magazine). When he met him face to face he had to change his look completely....This guy walks in with this dog....it had blisters all over it...I swear to God this a true story....
PIERRE: This is our five minutes to say something really important.
JEFF: Right, so this guy walks in with this dog...we have to tell the dog story. I swear this is true....it's all written down somewhere. (Mercifully, the tape runs out. Saved by the bell!)

ED KUEPPER (SAINTS/LAUGHING CLOWNS)

A Short chat with **ED KUEPPER**:
Ed Kuepper took some time out to talk before his gig at New York's Spo-Dee-o-dee during the New Music Seminar, 7/18/89. Unfortunely, as happens on rare occasions, the tape did not record properly and the conversation was lost. A first for this magazine, and an embarassment. On the good side, it was the shortest interview we've conducted yet for the magazine, and it was the only interview this year where I checked the tape the same night as the interview. Discovering the cassette malfunction, I sat down and immediately scratched out what I could remember of our meeting, working from the notes I'd jotted down both before and during the interview to direct the line of questioning. I thought this a better course of action than canning the piece, both out of respect for Ed's time spent, and because my memory was fairly clear. If there is a misquote, it's more likely to be phrasing than content, this I believe to be the truth. Also, as Ed is not an established star in this country, he could use an informed piece of some sort.

Ed founded **THE SAINTS** with **CHRIS BAILEY** in 1973. He wrote the music for "I'm Stranded," their infamous punk classic, a song that is to Australian rock what "Anarchy in the U.K." is to the English at roughly the same time. After the success of that single in '75/'76, Saints recorded their first LP of the same title. Though it's poorly recorded, sounding like rough demos, it blisters the stereo. Saints moved to England, racked up their first top 40 hit there with "This Perfect Day," and released Eternally Yours in 1978, one of the best punk LPs of all time, featuring another incredible classic, "Know Your Product." After another LP, Prehistoric Sounds, The Saints quit, with all but Bailey returning to Australia.

Of course, Bailey went on to put together a new Saints in '79 in London, just as Kuepper was emerging with **LAUGHING CLOWNS** back in Australia. Unlike the first two Saints' LPs, none of the Clowns' records were ever released here (same as The 2nd Saints, until recently), but a few were licensed in different forms to English label Red Flame (a much cheaper import than from Aus.), like Laughing Clowns and Laughter Around the Table and the single "Everything That Flies." Two Aussie singles we particularly recommend are "Theme From Mad Flies Mad Flies" and "Eternally Yours." Clowns were much different than Saints, with an almost jazz/rock fusion added to Kuepper's inventive guitar and heldover punk energy, often great, often abrasive challenging music.

He disbanded that band in '85 and went solo, grabbing an acoustic LP and getting a more involved and more electric sound with each release, '85's Electrical Storm, '87's Rooms of The Magnificent and his new and best one (and first U.S. release since '78) Everybody's Got To on Capitol.

We waited a long time to see guitar maestro Kuepper play here, and we were fortunate to get him promoting his strongest batch of songs in his solo career (see live review elsewhere). A genuine

thrill to see one of the people who redefined the modern guitar sound as we know it, not only for 12 years of Australian bands, but for so many U.S. bands who've covered old Saints songs (or Clowns) or ever were blown away by his recordings ("I'm Stranded" obviously, but so many more as well).

Ed has a reputation to be anything but talkative. He's been called "the iceman" in the press, and even Bailey made a joke about humorless aryans when being pressed on his difficulties with old mate Ed. But we're happy to say he smiled his share during the conversation, and seemed pleased to be playing. He is reserved, but if he's not fidgety and excited, he was more than cooperative.

JR: Have you played extensively in Europe?
ED: We've just finished a lot of dates there.
JR: How many dates are you doing here in the U.S.?
ED: Just three, Maxwells, this, and then L.A.
JR: So, what, are you just coming through America on your way home to Australia from Europe?
ED: Yes
JR: You'll have traveled around the world then?
ED: Yes.
JR: How did you like Maxwells?
ED: I hated it.
JR: Why?
ED: I'm used to playing places where the P.A. works. (Curious coincidence: The Saints had P.A. problems when they played there too.)
JR: So hopefully this will be better than your U.S. debut.
ED: Hopefully.
JR: You've written and released a hundred songs or so. Do your solo sets concentrate on your solo stuff or are you tempted to do **SAINTS** and **LAUGHING CLOWNS** pieces?
ED: On the last tour we did quite a few old songs from both bands. (names 8 or 9 of them, I believe "Swing For The Crime," "Messing With the Kid" and "Eternally Yours" were a few of them, sorry folks!) Tonight we'll do "The Prisoner."

ANOTHER SHOT OF ED KUEPPER, AT SPO-DEE-O-DEE, NEW YORK, 7/18/89, DURING THE NEW MUSIC SEMINAR. GREAT SHIRT, ISN'T IT? PHOTO: JACK RABID

JR: I'm surprised, I guess it's just my perception of you, but I would have thought you'd do all solo stuff and just forget the past.
ED: Well, we did at first, when that was important. Now that I've been solo for four years I can play what I like.
JR: When you were growing up were you really inspired by **JIMMY REED** and all the old blues musicians, like **JOHN LEE HOOKER**?
ED: Yes!
JR: Have you seen many of them play?
ED: Sure, lots of them. I saw **MUDDY WATERS, BO DIDDLEY**, and several others I can't think of on the spot.
JR: What's your favorite recordings from your long career?
ED: I can't say. Ask me at any time and I have a different list (still doesn't say when pressed).
JR: I'm partial to "No More Sentamental Jokes" of your solo stuff.
ED: Sorry, we're not playing that tonight.
JR: What do you remember about The Hope and Anchor in London (where Saints were recorded for a double live compilation)?
ED: Not much, except a National Front skinhead opened the door for us, a nice bloke except that he was a nazi, a screwed up head.
JR: That live version smokes! ("Demolition Girl")
ED: Yes, I heard it once, I seem to remember it being surprisingly sound. (looking through issue 27 of Big Takeover) Hey what's this! (points to Saints' bootleg 7" on punk vault).
JR: Brisbane TV, '77 bootleg, awful quality.
ED: I don't think we ever played on TV in Brisbane. I think that's wrong. At any case, that's not a photo of The Saints, that's a photo of Laughing Clowns! Can you get me one of these?
JR: I'll do my best, they're hard to come by. Is it a pain to be an ex-Saint?
ED: No, I formed the band and I split them up in 1978. There's another band calling themselves that at the moment, but that doesn't bother me. It's only a pain when people dwell on that time to the extent that they downplay The Clowns or my solo work, which I believe is equally valid.
JR: Indeed, there is a band called Saints doing pretty well these days, and didn't you fill in as their bass player on short notice for an Australian tour in 1984?
ED: (surprised, curled upper lip) Yes I did, but only for a short 3 week tour as a favor to **CHRIS (BAILEY**, Saints singer, who formed the band with Kuepper in '73), who needed someone at the last minute.
JR: Well you must have had to learn all their 80's material they've recorded since they reformed without you in 1979.
ED: Yes, but that was no problem since all the songs are in the same key (another mean smile).
JR: That must have been some fun.
ED: No, not really.
JR: Didn't I read in the Aussie press back then that you and Bailey had buried the hatchet and would soon be recording an album together of your favorite covers?
ED: That's right, and we still might someday, it's just that he and I haven't had a chance to actually do it. And still, we'd probably disagree over what songs belonged on the record!
JR: You've always had your share of disagreements with him over the years, though, even when you were in the same band, right?
ED: Yes.
JR: Were The Laughing Clowns before their time? It seems that others have had some success mining

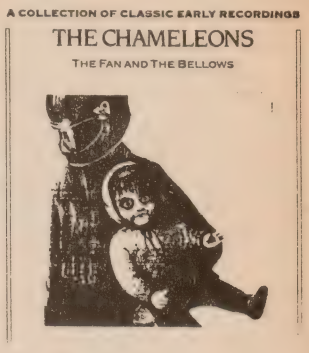
territory you first opened up.
ED: Yes, we were I think.
JR: How did The Clowns dissolve, leading to your solo career?
ED: I just felt that they'd gone as far stylistically as they could, and I no longer wanted to pursue that, I wanted to make a solo album, which became Electrical Storm.
JR: Is it different being a solo musician with a backing band, after so many years with Saints and Laughing Clowns?
ED: No, because the group I have, **THE YARD GOES ON FOREVER**, are very much a band, have become a band, and I have the smae control as I'd had in the past.
JR: Welcome to New York.
ED: Thank you.
JR: Your first visit to the States, isn't it?
ED: I stepped off a plane in Houston on a trip to somewhere else, but this is really my first time here.
JR: Didn't you try to come over once before with The Saints in the late 70's?
ED: Yes, we were supposed to, but it just didn't happen.
JR: To support Eternally Yours?
ED: No, before that, in 1977, after I'm Stranded was released. We stayed in England instead.

TOP 35 BEST RECORDS!

TOP 35 RECORDS

What?! Is it time to review records again? Alright no grousing today, I promise. Just get to it. Roll up the sleeves, spit on my palms, stock up on Nestles quick (this is the hot chocolate season) while I try to forget what a scummy corporation Nestles is (the old head in the sand ostrich technique works wonders sometimes), turn my head the other way when I pass the video rental store, and otherwise, attack! It's them (the stereo) or me, and it's going to be me! Anyways, space fans, you know how this section works, but never fear, if you don't and you're one of those people who tries to bluff your way rather then admit your ignorance (it's an art, isn't it?), I'll have mercy and explain it to you. The first 35 records listed here are the top 35 records of the last 6 months, i.e., the 35 I recommend most for purchase and dissemination They are ranked in order of appearance. The Stone Roses are #1, next is #2, and so on, so, yes, Stone Roses LP was the best record of the May 1-October 31 period. One record was snuck in; Morrissey is one artist we make allowances for around here. Even though the new single was released in November, a review appears here. One note: There are less reviews then in the past few issues. Why? What lame, smarmy excuse have I? Only that issue #26 was a month late, so there was a month less time to hear records, particularly by artists I either wasn't familiar with or don't already have a track record in my hungry brain for having given me a good time in the past. This is unfortunate since it's part of my intent to uncover stuff, and it pains me that a few gems might be missing, but I still have the pile of unheard records, and if I find any, they'll appear next time. Also, keep in mind that only about 1/6 or 1/7 of what I hear gets reviewed, so if you think the reviews are overly favorable, don't get the impression that I like everything, 'cause it's as far from the truth as could be. In actual fact, I'm only interested in writing about the stuff that turns me on. I read other mags to find out about records that are good that I don't know about, or to find out how the new record is by groups I've been interested in in the past. It makes more sense to me to use my space to pass along what I've found to be inspiring, in the hope you might check it out to. Shakespeare was right; music is the food of life, and I don't know about you, but I'm hungry.

STONE ROSES



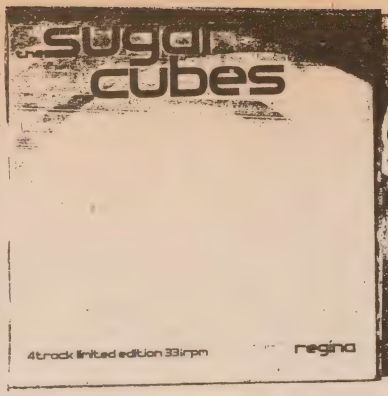
(1)STONE ROSES-SELF TITLED DEBUT LP

(2)CHAMELEONS-FAN AND THE BELLOWS '81-'82 ARCHIVES

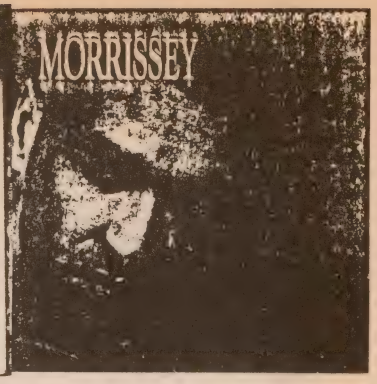
THE STONE ROSES-THE STONE ROSES (Silvertone/RCA US), "She Bangs The Drums" (Silvertone UK), "Sally Cinnamon" (reissue, Black/FM-Revolver UK): Funny that the best album of 1989 would be blown away by the band's live performance. **JOHN LECKIE** did a great job with the production, but Manchester's Stone Roses, in particular singer **IAN BROWN**, seem almost cautious here in comparison to the Dingwalls gig. Still, this LP bursts on a scene desperate for new bands that could somehow replace all the recently fallen giants of the early 80's, and with their flair for ego-centric self-promotion and arrogance, they've bolted to the top, much as the Smiths did. They're a combination of boldness and the talent to back it up. **JOHN SQUIRE** is one hell of an inventive guitarist, and he and Brown combine on a collection of songs that are (this is what we've been looking for) both meaty and priceless, thick yet subtle, and damn impossible to get out of one's head. The harmonies of Brown and hot stylist drummer **RENI** (he of neo-reggae beats, sharp hihat touches and strong drive) compact each tune for unplanned subway singing, and though the press release mentions the Byrds, Buffulo Springfield and The Beatles, it seems it's closer to a cross between The Hollies (such nice harmonies) with The Bunnymen (power and sweep), and even that's not going to give you a good picture. "I Wanna Be Adored" opens up, slowly building towards quick bursts of fire only to be extinguished momentarily again. Stone Roses have this up/down habit of toying with the listener that has a grat effect. "She Bangs The Drums," "(Song For My) Sugar Spun Sister," "This is the One" and especially the incredible "Made of Stone" (the best single of 1989, and not surprisingly the best cut on the LP, why is it on side 2?) are the pop classics that will galvinize dispirate peoples into believing that all is not lost on the pop front. "Elephant Stone" (not on the UK LP, a good addition here) is the cathchy dance song, "Waterfall" and "Shoot You Down" are the two moody ones, "Don't Stop" is "Waterfall" backwards (!), and the quickie "Elizabeth My Dear" is a condemnation of the monarchy set to one verse of **SIMON AND GARFUNKEL**'s "Scarborough Fair." Last and best is the closing 8 minute monster, "I am The Resurrection," which combines the inherrent building drama of "I Wanna Be Adored" with their heaviest chrous of the LP, "I am the Resurrection

and the light/I couldn't ever bring myself to hate you as I might" (I think that's it, no lyrics sheet), which smashes with each snare hit by Reni into a mighty release, but there's more: A free-for-all yet strictly constructed power groove ending with a dash of funk follows, that stops for good only to come out of retirement for another 2 minutes or so. A climactic finish on a near perfect album (very few of those these days!), one so well crafted yet transcendent it's a relief to have come across it! Perhaps Stone Roses are the resurrection of music that can lift you up to the clouds, sound and songs that exhilirate in jetstreams of the ecstatic mind. The best thing is that the LP gets better and better with each play, it's lasting power is remarkeable, Squire's guitar has seen to that! Buy buy buy buy buy buy buy buy. **NOTE:** "She Bangs the Drums" 45 adds a terrific bside "Mersey Paradise," another killer pop wonder, plus "Standing Here," which at 5 plus minutes of lazy drifting is their weakest effort so far. The "Sally Cinnamon" reissue is a steal, as you can't find these three excellent songs anyplace else. This was their 2nd single back in '87, their last before signing to Silvertone, yet the confidence, bravado, and simple greatness were already there, particularly on the a-side. reissue address: 152 Goldthorn Hill, Penn, Wolverhampton, WV2 3JA, UK.)

THE CHAMELEONS - The Fan and The Bellows (Caroline): Singer/bassist **MARK BURGESS** claimed in part one of the interview with Big Takeover last issue that this LP is not, as the cover claims, "a collection of classic early recordings," but is rather "second rate demos we did in a week for Virgin Records, more like it." The Chameleons went to court in '85 and obtained an injunction to block the release of this album, but with the band split up two years now, suddenly it mysteriously appears in the shops! Good thing too, despite Burgess and his mates' trepidations, and against their wishes, Fan and The Bellows is actually an essential look at the primitive post-punk inspired early days of a later incredible band. Four of the tracks were released previously on their first few singles, including the colossal, paranoiac debut "In Shreds." The real find though is the six unknown songs, especially the title track, which was originally intended as the first single. The Chameleons were known for their epic song structures and their textural brilliance, delay ridden gutairs and powerful sweep, but in '81 they sounded more like the early Wah or TV21, or any number of well-missed post-punk bands of the period, with simple songs and simple playing. All the energy of a young Chameleons combines with a knack for a well written tune they were to fully develop later, with a direct passionate buzz and fast tempos. From both a historical and aural perspective, this is a fine LP that doesn't embarrass their later cannon of three remarkable albums (culminating in their masterpiece double LP Strange Times) and 2 wonderous US tours. Not just for the converted.....(114 W. 26th St. NY, NY) (Late note: as this LP seems to have once again disappeared from the market, but a month after it's release, it seems plausible that someone from The Chameleons has once again blocked its distribution and sale. Their right to control their own music we all respect; nevertheless it's our loss. Perhaps as discussed last issue, Burgess and co. will manage to release this on their own someday, perhaps with more unreleased songs like "Dali's Picture" and "Things I Wish I'd Said," not included here. Then everyone, band and fans would be happy.



(3)SUGARCUBES-"REGINA" 45



(4)MORRISSEY-"OUIJA BOARD, OUIJA BOARD" 45

THE SUGARCUBES-"Regina" (Elektra/WEA): 2nd best single of the year behind (barely) Stone Roses' "Made of Stone." Let's ignore **EINER**'s anti-vocals. He's merely the comic relief, the clown before the main attraction of the show, **BJORK.** "Regina" is little Bjork's greatest achievement yet, even better than "Birthday," her voice soaring like the plane she pretends to be in the video into layers we've never heard before! Many people have voices we admire, love, or even are awed by. How many do we truly marvel at? One so astounding you'd never consider singing along? "Ha ha, Regina" reverberates and floats through your radio, through your MTV, through your secret home stereo, filling up every inch of your pleasure sensations, tickling every sensory perception you posess. Song is great too, and have we heard better production yet? The guitars shimmer so deeply it's as if they come from the bottom of a clear blue ocean, and of cource the rhythm section grooves perfectly on a delicate flowing beat. I'm told this dwarfs the rest of Here Today, Tomorrow Next Week, which hopefully isn't true, but for even one extraordinary phenomenon like this four minutes we sit and all but pray to prey on each day of our music lives. You know, the kind to stop one dead in one's tracks, the kind that penetrates even the deepest conflicting concentration, the kind that never allows the mind to stray from its aural paradise for even a moment. Never been a big fan before, either! A wonder!

MORRISSEY-"Ouija Board, Ouija Board" (EMI UK): ITEM #1: Morrissey has obviously patched up his differences with **STEVEN STREET**, as the a-side is once again co-written by the pair, and the two are even sitting in on the sessions for **DIMIANDA GALAS**' new record. To think, just earlier this year, Street slapped an injunction on "Interesting Drug," delaying it's release 'til he was paid money he claimed was due him, a move that moved Morrissey's management to comment to the press that it was unlikely the two would ever collaborate again. Strange, though, Street doesn't produce this, the first time since the old **JOHN PORTER** days from the early **SMITHS** that Street hasn't been involved. The new producers are **CLIVE LANGER** and **ALAN WINSTANLEY** who go back to the late 70's punk era. And though ex-Smiths **ANDY ROURKE, MIKE JOYCE** and **CRAIG GANNON** aren't here as they were the last two singles, excellent Viva Hate stickman **ANDREW PARESI** is back on drums. ITEM 2: We're told by a usually reliable source that the odds are this is the last release under Morrissey's name, and from now on he will be recording under The Smiths' name. This probably means Joyce and Rourke will be back, and maybe Gannon

as well. The press in England is also full of reports that Morrissey and **JOHNNY MARR** are back on good terms and are speaking regularly, so the possibility of Marr being involved once again is more likely than we would have thought as well. Cross your fingers. As Morrissey has cancelled French solo dates, something is probably afoot. A Manchester X-mas gig may be in the works, could this be the unveiling of Smiths II? As for this record, it must then be a one off experiment. The other players here are **STEVE HOPKINS** piano, **MATTHEW SELIGMAN** bass, and the everpresent **KEVIN ARMSTRONG** on guitar. Armstrong is no match for giants like Marr or **VINNY REILLEY**, or even Gannon/**NEIL TAYLOR**, but again he's pretty good, and his parts are interesting. The a-side is odd in that the word "ouija" always sounds funny spoken much less sung! Morrissey consults the board to contact an old friend who is no longer with us, well, nothing ventured, nothing gained! Nice enough groove, nice enough song. As always seems to be the case with Morrissey, the b-sides are better! "Yes, I am Blind" is the sort of Mozzer warmth so overflowing it just about kills you. Slow, fluffy and as gentle as a million feathers. How does he do it every time? The 12' adds an extra track, damned if isn't a **HERMANS HERMITS**' cover! A top 40 hit for them in December '66 in Britain at that, but not exactly one of their better known songs. It was written by **GRAHAM GOULDMAN**, who also wrote two of **THE YARDBIRDS**' greatest hits, "For Your Love" and "Heart Full of Soul," as well as my favorite **HOLLIES**' single, "Look Through Any Window," in '65 before blowing his credibility with **10CC** and **WAX** (nobody's perfect). Great to hear! Good version too. I.E. buy the 12" over the 7," so what, another 3 bucks. It's Morrissey after all!

IAN McCULLOCH

SORRY FOLKS, OUR CASSETTE OF THE DICKIES' SECOND COMING LP DID NOT COME WITH SLEEVE ARTWORK. HOPEFULLY THIS WILL NOT IMPEDE YOUR IDENTIFYING THE RECORD SHOULD YOU SEARCH FOR IT IN YOUR LOCAL RECORD STORE.

(5)IAN MACULLOCH-CANDLELAND SOLO LP

(6)THE DICKIES-SECOND COMING LP, THEIR 4TH

IAN McCULLOCH-CANDLELAND (Sire/WEA) "Proud to Fall" (Korova/WEA UK): Good choice of producer. **RAY SCHULMAN**, (who, incidently, was a member of early 70's lousy prog-rock band **GENTLE GIANT**) has impressed us with his work with Sugarcubes and Sundays, and he's just the right man for the job if Ian Mac wants to go light without going wimpy. Yes, MaCulloch has death on his mind, after the deaths of his Dad, his friend Chris in the **PALE FOUNTAINS**, and most shocking of all, motorbike crash victim **PETE DEFREITAS** (6/14/89 Rugeley, UK, on his way from London back to Liverpool to begin work on the first **ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN** LP since MaCulloch quit last year). Sure, this is pretty good therapy, especially on the almost spiritually quiet "Start Again," which closes the album: "Nothing dies, nothing ever dies" Mac sings to himself. Echo's bombast and exhilirating guitar rock are not in Mac's imagination here, perhaps the only precedent would be songs like "Ocean Rain" and "All My Life," not only in light texture, but in Mac's husky low voice which he uses throughout this album: You know, it sounds like he's breathing heavily. Strings, xylophones, woodwinds (I think) and soft tones mean reflective material like the title track (duet with **COCTEAU TWIN LIZ FRAZIER**), "I Know You Well," and the only bad song (too bad they chose this for the new 2nd single!) "Faith and Healing," which aside from sounding a bit too much like bad New Order, is less revealing about grief than "Start Again." But, lest you think Mac is Mr. Mellow, there's still a few jolts to get you going. The twisting, spindly "In Bloom" is defiant Mac at his best, with a bewitching repeating guitar line. The opening "Flickering Wall" into "White Hotel" have a resplendent power and lush wave of feeling that's always inspired his many admirers (particularly musicians, did anyone mention Mighty Lemon Drops and The Ocean Blue?). The only tracks that sound like they could have been outtakes from that last (epoymous) Bunnymen album are "Horse's Head," a majesty that recalls "Bombers Bay" or "Seven Seas" and the pre-LP single "Proud to Fall," which originally struck me as being "The Game" part 2 or something, but has since endeared himself more thoughoughly. OK, no one is claiming that this is better than Echo, but it doesn't have to be! The real Bunnymen are gone, what's good is that he's chosen a new direction and he's done it very well. This is a very satisfying record, and a hell of an improvement on his '85 solo debut cover of "September Song!" That you're more likely to play it in your somber, introspective or "winding down" moods than you are in your "get psyched" ones is just an indication of Mac's metamorphosis as he trys something new on his own, just a different flavor if you will. Very pleasing at that! In fact, it's lovely. **NOTE!**: Mac has pulled a fast one on us, releasing "Proud to Fall" twice, with two separate sets of b-sides! That rat! Does he think we all have $14 for four songs? Oh well bite the bullet for the first version (pic sleeve is Mac head shot), since "Pots of Gold" would have been one of the more convincing cuts on the LP, and "The Dead End" is a quite nice strumming song too. The 2nd version is a pic of just his lips (!! like sugar?) and is backed with a somewhat unimpressive **JONI MITCHELL** cover "The Circle Game" quite similar to the original, and "Everything is Real," which though an OK mixture of violin and guitar, is not enough for the expenditure. Interestingly enough, though, the 2 b-sides on the new "Faith and Healing" 45 feature the new band Mac put together for his current UK solo tour **THE PRODIGAL SONS**, and in his recent interviews, Mac has promised a return to heavy rocking now that he's coming out of his justifiable (and interesting) mourning period. Got to hear this!

THE DICKIES-SECOND COMING (Enigma): Great album! Much better than expected, even given the Dickies consistent past. This is the 4th LP and along with last year's Killer Klowns EP, the first newly written Dickies material in 9 years! Many had reservations about that EP, but the two best tracks also appear here, "Magoomba" and "Booby Trap," two hard pop zingers you can't tire of. I've heard a lot of old fans say they're disappointed with this LP too, but I can't see why, there's so much great stuff! "Cross Eyed Tammy" and "Goin' Homo" we know from

the live sets, both zippy songs with those charmingly silly lyrics. A cover of **THE COWSILS'** "Hair" from the dreaded Rock Opera of the same name is surprisingly zany Dickisized (though it's not "Nights in White Satin" or "Gigantor" or anything, it's damn neat), the closing "Monkey See Monkey Do" is the most straight out burning number since "Where Did His Eye Go" and even the hokey "Dummy Up" has its moments. "I'm Stan" is a heavy metal parody howl, with guitarist **STAN LEE** and his do-nothing life style the butt. "Caligula" is another strong, long epic that should have been used in the movie! The only loser is a corny, overdone idea of **GENE PITNEY's** "Town Without Pity," perhaps the first ever bad Dickies cover after a dozen or more hot ones. Much of the credit goes to producer **RON HITCHCOCK**, who gives them a crispness, and a clean sound rarely found in such high energy records, and to **LEONARD GRAVES**, whose singing is as clownish and cartoonish as before, but who has developed a fine, convincing vocal style behind the muse. "Booby Trap" especially is an impressive job. Special award for cameo appearnce of Leonard's mother (his parents also posed for the hilarious sleeve to the "Silent Night" 45 with mom wrapped up as a present under the X-mas tree while pop watches the Dating Game!), who gets sacrificed to the wrath of Magoomba for making Leonard eat her cooking, kissing him at family gatherings, and other unconscionable crimes. The poor doting madre is particularly a tragic hero in this b-movie, since her life is devoted to her thankless Dickie son; she even makes a point of bringing home Hohos, Yoo Hoos, and Hamburger Helper for his lunch (with the vexing choice of Pepsi or Milk to drink), but let's face it, when Magoomba decides you have to be sacrificed, you've had it! From '78's "Give it Back" to another shakin' b-movie classic on this LP, "Monster Island" (60's surf pop at its best), the Dickies have been bringing it for 12 years. Hey you people who don't like this record, you better give it another chance, or maybe you too will incur the wrath of Magoomba! ("Prepare the sacrifice!")

(7)BUZZCOCKS F.O.C.- "TOMORROW'S SUNSET 12" (8)THE REEGS-"SEE MY FRIENDS" 12"

BUZZCOCKS/F.O.C.-"Tomorrow's Sunset" (PRT UK): **STEVE DIGGLE** changes the name of his band from "F.O.C." to "Buzzcocks/F.O.C." Apparently, a show in Paris was billed that way without his knowledge and 4000 people showed, so he must have figured it was a good idea to adopt that name. It is a dubious rationale, but on the other hand, the music industry in general, and the music press in particular, has wilfully ignored Diggle's post-Buzzcocks' music, dismissing him with the most casual wave of a disinterested hand as a "has-been." One thing, is for sure, this name change has won Diggle more press attention in two months than he received in 8 years! Curiously enough, events have rendered the issue moot. **PETE SHELLEY**, after voicing his displeasure with Diggle's move in the press, now has reunited the real Buzzcocks, Diggle included, and they seem set to continue as a working band. So the very people who've been all but spitting in Diggle's face will now be lining up to pay their homage as old firends and admirers. Diggle, being an unusually nice soul, will turn a blind eye, even though every Shelley release, both good and completely uninspired, was well covered in the press, while these same writers wouldn't give him the time of day. A disgusting cultural predjuice that assumes only front men are relevent. Sadly enough, this is one release too late to change the name, as all old Buzzcocks' fans would have been thrilled to the bone with the Exiles EP, Diggle's last record before this. A burning killer, perhaps the only Shelley or Diggle record that could have been released easily under the Buzzcocks moniker. This new one is more akin to "Last Train to Safety," one of Steve's more subtle numbers. Produced by Mr.-I-hate-bottom-end himself, **MARTIN HANNET**, an old mate who did Buzzcocks' Spiral Scratch EP as well as some of the last singles (he's better known for his work with **JOY DIVISION**, **U2**, etc.), this is meant more to tickle then to bowl over. A strong new release that suffers more from the name change than in quality, too bad. "Life With the Lions" is more direct, a rocker with Diggle's usual big chorus, real tasty. As a solo artist, Diggle had a lot of talent; it's too bad his past associations gave him abuse instead of the credibility he deserves, or the name change itself would never have been necessary. As it is, this is probably the last record with this best ever F.O.C. lineup; his band isn't likely to wait for Diggle, particularly as Buzzcocks look to be sticking around. A strange turn of events yes. Another excellent record, yes. Oh well. Timing is everything.

THE REEGS-"See My Friends," "Chorus of The Lost" (Imaginary UK): Now that **SUN AND THE MOON** has left us, perhaps The Reegs, made up of ex-**CHAMELEONS** guitarists **DAVE FIELDING** and **REG SMITHIES**, will at least carry on the Chameleons' standard of utter brilliance. "See my Friends," an old '65 **KINKS** single extraordinaire recorded for inclusion on the elsewhere reviewed Imiginary Kinks' tribute covers LP Shangri-La certainly is a tremendous start, a twisted, giant, modern remake of one of **RAY DAVIES'** greatest moments. It makes you dizzy. The two b-sides were bound to pale somewhat, but they still bear interest, especially "This Savage Garden" which uses guitar effects in much the ingenious way that one would hope for from their past work. The other, an instrumental called strangely enough "Is There a Mother-in-Law in the Club" (no why, are you behind on your child support payments?) sounds like a couple of banjos and a washboard, strangely out of character but alright. The new single finds a new member added, **GARY** on lead vocal (neither Reg nor Dave felt comfortable handling the singing, which is too bad, they did a more than credible job), as well as solina strings (whatever those are!) by the equally surname-less **WAYNE** on one song. The rhythm on the a-side reminds a little of "In Shreds" with it's low punch. Pretty good, but it goes on a little too long. The b-sides are better. "Pond Life" is a sprightly waltz, and another instrumental "Start to See" is scintillating with it's mix of Chameleon keyboards and double layered guitars. That's the good stuff we're looking for. Now comes word that another good Manchester band **THE LEARNING**

PROCESS have split, and that 2 of them, including popular singer **DERMIT** have joined on as new Reegs; we await the results of the new union. (28 Hopwood Ave., Hopwood, Heywood, Lancs, OL10 2AX, UK)

(9)THE LA's-"THERE SHE GOES" 45 (or EP 7")

(10)THE LAST-AWAKENING LP, THEIR 6TH.

THE LA'S-"There She Goes" (Go!/Polygram UK): Their photos in the British press depict squeaky clean, 60's inspired lads, and their music sounds much like their photos. That is if you can imagine your absolute favorite 60's pop, like "Carri-Anne" by The Hollies or anything off the first Bee Gees album in '67, 'cause this song is so delectible it makes you swoon with an innocent love of music that cynical you assumed you'd lost with your high school P.E. uniform. Yeah, you could imagine these guys on Shindig or Hullabaloo or Ready Steady Go, but unlike some overt nostalgia like the later Primal Scream, this is not backward looking, and makes no references to psychedelia. Just pure crystal pop, deep and great enough it's not some bubblegum pap. The harmonies sucker you in like a fish who fell for live bait, and the absolute lack of cutesy pie pretention makes it charming rather than saccharine, lasting rather than temporal like most such simple pop. I was supposed to get 3 b-sides according to the sleeve, lucky me, but the folks at the Rough Trade Shop in London made a mistake and slipped in the regular 2 song single instead of the limited edition 4 track one I thought I'd bought. Too bad, after that adorable, sparkling a-side greedy me wanted more than just "Come in, Come Out" which sounds much like they're just fooling around, wonder what "Who Knows" and the new version of "Way Out" sound like! Woe is me! Tantalised by the two missing songs, in the great switcheroo. Ah well. Other 2 singles (by La's) here I come.

THE LAST-AWAKENING (SST): Much, much better than their comeback LP of last year Confession. The songs are better, the playing is better, the production (again by mega-fan **DESCENDENTS/ALL** drummer **BILL STEVENSON**) is especially better. Three songs on side one immediately hit hard: The opening "No Love" is a surprising slap, both lyrically (this is singer/guitarist **JOE NOLTE** after all) and in sonic sound. "You" starts out like a ballad, and just as you're plopping up a pillow to enjoy it, the whole band comes flying in like John Madden or Rodney Dangerfield bursting through a sign. The hottest number, however, is "Garden Grow," which is punctuated by snare rolls matched by the guitar/bass lines, a punk rock side you almost don't expect from a band with such a 60's pop background. Keyboardist **MIKE NOLTE** chips in a few great songs too, the slower "Your Wings" and the farfisa heavy "Book of Life." Two surprising ending covers too, **THE BEATLES**' "She Loves You" and **THE SHIRELLES**' "Baby It's You" (also covered by Beatles and others), both done so faithfully they sound much like the originals only with modern sound. Pretty bizarre, wonder what they were thinking (after all, what they once did to "Be Bop a Lula" on '79's L.A. Explosion, **GENE VINCENT** would almost not recognise it!). The strenghths of the early Last seem back more completely. Joe's 12 string rickenbacker still gives them that midly baroque sound, a great contrast for a band with such garage energy. Mike's keyboard, though not as classic 60's as **VITUS MATARE**'s in the older days, still cuts through, winding around the guitars surreptitiously like a keyboard should, another dimension rather than the star of the show. And of course, what they're known for, some of the best songs around, talent applied to inspirations as diverse as Beach Boys and Sex Pistols, two old favorites. 5 albums now, a full tour under their belts, another LP in progress, produced, we hear, by **EARL MANKEY**. Too good to be true from a band that was dead and buried as recent as three years ago. We got one back here. **NOTE:** Two old members, Matare and **DAVID NOLTE** come back to make cameo appearances on the LP (PO Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260)

(11)STRANGLERS-PEEL SESSIONS '82 EP

(12)CAPTAIN SENSIBLE-REVOLUTION NOW LP

THE STRANGLERS-THE RADIO 1 SESSIONS; THE EVENING SHOW 1/24/82) EP (Nighttracks/Strange Fruit UK): Catching Stranglers in '82 after their late 70's early days and before their more recent return to greatness is not the ideal time for the first Stranglers' BBC Sessions EP release, yet you'd never know it from this record! First of all, unlike most bands who almost exclusively debut new material for their BBC sessions (which are recorded in a day and are nationally broadcast over the radio a few weeks later), Stranglers drag out a '77 1st LP track "Down in The Sewer" and play the whole seven and a half minutes! More intense than the original, in a word this is a killer, up there with Buzzcocks' "I Believe" for longest 4/4 rocker without letup! The other four tracks are as exciting too, a down and dirty, tough "Nuclear Device" which is bound to have you taking out your old single to hear it again, (they go right into "Genetix" too, to make the whole thing 8 minutes long! Between this and "Down in the Sewer," we're talking about a couple of Cecille B. DeMille epics here!) It's almost a shock that the heavy "The Man They Love to Hate," is a mere 4 minutes! **HUGH CORNWELL** sings through a flanger (or a harmonizer) on this one, making you think he's singing from down in the sewer. Would still like to hear a Black and White or No More Heroes Peel Session (hello Strange Fruit?), but this is surprisingly steller mid period meninblack. $8 is a lot but that's OK for this.

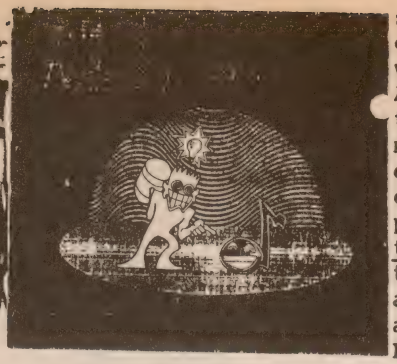
CAPTAIN SENSIBLE-REVOLUTION NOW (double LP, Deltic UK): Can you believe, this is the first Sensible LP in 7 years! Late '82's The Power of Love was wonderful, a shining work in a solo career that's never been too shabby. In fact, although there hasn't been an LP since then, Sensible has at least kept the singles coming, most of 'em quite strong ("There are More Snakes Than Ladders," "Wot, No Meat,") with some merely OK ("Come on Down," "One Christmas Catalog"). The last three 45s are included on Revolution Now, with the title track, the best Sensible single since "Glad It's All Over," as well as the sublime "The Toys Take Over" and the soul raveup **EQUALS** '68 cover (with guest guitar by Equals' founder and current pop star **EDDIE GRANT**) "I Get So Excited. However, the most scintillating tracks are scattered throughout: The opening "Missing The Boat," is a lithe poppy flosscake like The Power of Love and the better cuts on Women and Captains First (think "Brenda"), the scrumptious filling Sensible fans never get enough of. "Smash it Up Part 4" is more like part one than his **DAMNED**'s memorable punk single (Pt. 2), an atmospheric instrumental with a forlorn guitar line running through. Hey, what happened to Part 3? Next LP? Or Did the good Captain forget how to count? "The Kamikaze Millionaire," though shamelessly lifting **THE STRANGLERS** "ooooh oooh" choruses from thier hit "Skin Deep" is nevertheless warm as a fuzzy sweater. And all of side 4 is one long epic, "The Coward of Treason Cove," which always shifts gears like it's predecessor, side 4 of The Damned's The Black Album "Curtain Call." No, it can't duplicate the eery fright and chilling sountrack of that particular 20 minute masterpiece, yet it still manages to be intriguing rather than dead boring, a difficult "rock-opera" accomplishment! Ex-Damned guitarist **HENRY BADOWSKI** returns here. Two other cuts stand out for their memories of '79-'83 era Damned when Sensible was at his best. "A Riot On Eastbourne Pier" even once again finds Sensible recruiting his old Damned drummer **RAT SCABIES** for his oh-so-recognizable over the top/smash it up power-fills drumming. Hot track. The other is more deceptive, the Side 3 ending "Exploding Heads and Teapots (Past Their Prime)," where Sensible really goes for the kill vocally, a really passionate job from a trusted oldtimer. Maybe since it's been so long since he made an LP (his last Damned albumwas also in '82, the marvelous Strawberries) that he had so much material for a double. But the surprise is how consistent this is. The only place it lulls is side 2 where the weaker material all comes at once, but even then "Revolution Now" comes punching in to regain your attention. Also smart of him to throw in commercials, interviews, radio DJs and other talking bits between songs, linking the album in a long continuous package much like **THE WHO**'s classic '67 The Who Sell Out. To give you an idea of how much Sensible's pulled this off, this is a better and far more listenable album than two other OK recent doubles, XTC's alright but haphazard and overproduced Oranges and Lemons and The Cure's good but damned indulgent and poorly edited Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me. A surprisingly strong comeback; perhaps our old friend with the red beret never really left us! **NOTE:** it's good to see The Captain running his own label; we're told that another old favorite who's been down on his recording luck, **TV SMITH** will soon record his first LP in 7 years for Sensible's Deltic label with his band **THE CHEAP**. (14a Notting Hill Gate, London W11 3JE)

MEGA CITY FOUR-Tranzophobia, "Less Than Senseless," "Awkward Kid" (Decoy UK): Singles 3 and 4 and LP #1 for MC4. Funny thing about this LP. It overcomes a major flaw, namely that almost all the songs are the same tempo and the same beat! Shame on them for not paying more attention to the need for some variety, but on the other hand, these 14 songs are so great after a while you don't mind, and it's not often you can say that! If you've been grooving to "Clear Blue Sky" and "Miles Apart" you'll be surprised that not a single track from their four singles (nor their 3 compilation cuts) are contained on the LP, singer/guitarist **WIZ** must write songs during sound check or something! One can easily imagine Tranzophobia as 7 singles, all would hold up under more intense scrutiny! Given the lack of variety, such small doses make these songs really come alive too. So many favorites it's hard to choose, but "Severe Attack of the Truth," "Things I Never Said," "Promise," "Pride and Prejudice" and "Paper Tiger" might be the most delicious morsels. Again, caution, many repeated plays will be necessary to dispel the idea that you're being blitzed with the same song 13 times (before the ending "Stupid Way to Die" breaks the mold), an easily arrived at but nevertheless eroneous conclusion. 'Cause Wiz is one of the catchiest songwriters going today, admired even by the usually disdainful (when it comes to punky new guitar bands) UK press. Make lots of tapes, definitely take this zippy batch of songs one song at a time! The four songs on the other 2 singles are also up to snuff, with the brand new "Awkward Kid" being the shortest and best. Now that Buzzcocks are back, I guess the journalists (including me I guess) will stop thinking of them as the most poppy punk band we've heard since then, but the only reason these singles are huge hits is 'cause they're not being recorded by big stars. One of the best gets better. (231 Portobello Rd., London W11 1LT UK)

(13)MEGA CITY 4-DEBUT LP TRANZOPHOBIA

(14)GO-BETWEENS-PEEL SESSIONS '84 EP

THE GO-BETWEENS-THE PEEL SESSIONS (10/21/84) EP (Strange Fruit UK): Best pre-Tallulah Go-Betweens record ever. Recorded around 3rd LP Spring Hill Fair (a better version of "Five Words" appears), this is more chops than they displayed on that or any other record then, the exemplary songwriting and lyrics without the more twee side of their sometimes too studied sound. Here they just bang out "The Power That I Now Have," "Secondhand Furniture" and "Rare Breed," with real forthright forcefulness, makes you wonder why they didn't try this more often! Just one day to record and mix four songs may have had something to do with it! Nothing here matches the wonderful fragile feeling of "Bachelor Kisses," say, or even the wistfulness of "Part Company," both singles from Spring Hill Fair, but it's both odd and refreshing to see their impersonation of straight ahead rocking, only intelligently as they ever did. Sharp music for sharp people, literary and dense.

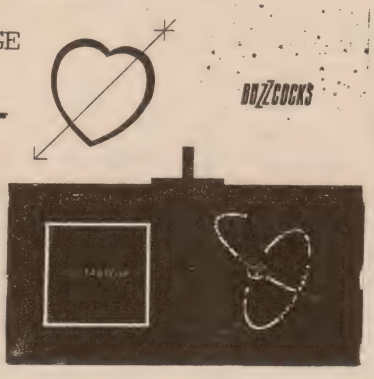


(15)PSYCHEDELIC FURS-BOOK OF DAYS LP

(16)ALL-ALLROY'S REVENGE LP (GOOD NEW SINGER)

PSYCHEDELIC FURS-BOOK OF DAYS (CBS): Where in the hell did this come from?! Could this be the same band that brought us those last two banal LPs, those twin disasters known as Mirror Moves and Midnight to Midnight? The latter was a detestable work of glossy dross; the former had some good songs like "Here Comes Cowboys," and "The Ghost in You," but the overall affect was grossly dissatisfying. It was so slick, neat tidy, and overtly unobtrusive, as if afraid to retain the edge the first three excellent LPs had enjoyed. Since then, Furs' singer/leader **RICHARD BUTLER** has disowned those two albums for the pop drivel they were. Then came the good comeback 45 "All That Money Wants" backed with the equally solid "Birdland," but even then, the trepidation remained until this LP. Yes, this is the real 4th LP (they pulled a Comsat Angels, only the Comsats' dance pop was pretty good), a genuinely logical progression after their best LP, the **TODD RUNGREN** produced Forever Now. They combine the slower tempos and more methodical feel of that LP with the wicked guitars of Talk Talk Talk and the repetition hypnosis of such first LP wonders as "India," which still burns a hole like a careless smoker. Again, this is no halfhearted (heartless?) attempt at US danceclubs and commercial radio accessibility, this is great music with their old style and real dirt. Even the two weakest tracks are both real good, the opening mind teaser "Shine" and the acoustic (with cello) "Torch." It would be nice to have more songs as catchy as "Into You Like a Train," "Merry Go Round," "You and I" and "Run & Run," but the Furs are more concerned with setting a dangerous mood here, of reclaiming the snarl in their sound. Pity, the most thrilling cuts are buried: They're the last 3 tracks on side 2, the cutting "House," the almost evil "Wedding" and the swirling "I Don't Mine" with its "Sleep Comes" (heard this lyric before?) line. Make sure you get to these last 3 cuts, in fact, make sure you hear this LP, don't go on the (recent) past!

ALL-Allroy's Revenge (Cruz): Big improvement vocally, with **SCOTT REYNOLDS** replacing the OK **DAVE SMALLEY** (ex **DYS & DAGNASTY**). In fact, Reynolds is nearly as distinctive and remarkable as the ever popular **MILO**, whose gritty sincerity led the group when they were known as **THE DESCENDENTS** (Milo has another band now called **MILESTONES**). Reynolds' own heartfelt directness and well developed voice perfectly compliment the pop/punk gems Descendents/All are still delivering after nine years. With the spotty Allroy Sez it was the single "Just Perfect." With last year's sharp Allroy For Prez EP who could stop playing "Skin Deep?" The current dose includes "Scary Sad," "Fool," "She's My Ex" and "Bubblegum," simple, catchy, melodic yet powerful short bursts of joy that are shrieking to be made singles. As with the EP, all of All (That's all) write all of All's songs, an obvious group effort that's good to see. It's easy to put up with the minor guitar metalisms from guitarist **STEPHEN EGERTON**, and the overall troubling tendency to rehash the 2nd rate coughing, disjointed, stop/start "songs" that have plaugued every LP since Descendents' I Don't Want to Grow Up); this band is too fine, too fresh, and too real to ever grow tired of. As in the past, an ace record for that tape of favorite songs you are making (or should be!). (PO Box 7756, Long Beach, CA 90807)



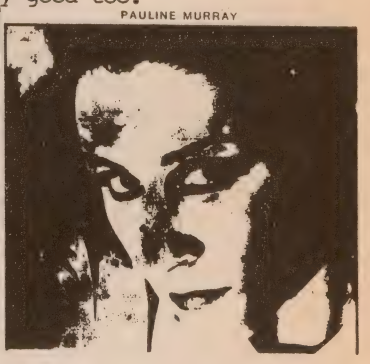
(17)BUZZCOCKS-"FAB 4" SINGLES EP 7"

(18)ED KUEPPER-EVERY-BODY'S GOT TO LP

THE BUZZCOCKS-"The Fab Four" EP (EMI UK): Taken from the box set compilation Product, this is just a four song teaser of their 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th singles. In addition to these original 45 releases, all four have been available in the U.S. on the popular Singles Going Steady LP, the first ever LP released by I.R.S. Records exactly 10 years ago. The 6th 45, "Ever Fallen in Love" was their biggest hit: Released Sept. 8, 1978, b/w "Just Lust" it spent 11 weeks in the UK top 40, going to #12. **FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS**' loathsome version a few years ago was an even bigger hit, both in the UK and here! Naked Raygun covers this song live too. Both a and b side are also found on the 2nd LP Love Bites. "Promises," the first a-side ever written by rhythm guitarist **STEVE DIGGLE** (with later help from **PETE SHELLEY**, who ended up singing it), was released November 11, 1978 b/w "Lipstick," and made it to #20 in the UK, with 10 weeks on the charts. "Everybody's Happy Nowadays," a cynical swipe at critics who said Buzzcocks could only write happy pop song ditties, by Shelley, came out March 2, 1979 b/w "Why Can't I Touch It," and it was #29 with 6 weeks on the charts. Lastly, Diggle's famous "Harmony in my Head," his biggest hit, appeared July 13, 1979 b/w "Something's Gone Wrong Again" and hit #32 with 6 weeks in the charts. Always good to hear Diggle sing. An impressive string any way you look at it. What else can I say about this record? Not much, since you'd be a fool to buy it at this import price, since all four songs, + 12 others are available for the same money on Singles Going Steady. Why did I buy it? Ok, so I'm a fool. If I could explain any of this fan madness rationally I wouldn't be wasting zillions of hours putting out a mag when there are quardillions of better things I could be doing! **NOTE1**: Sleeve graphics on back are exactly the same as on the back of "Spiral Scratch" EP, the band's first single in 1977. They saved the format!

THE BUZZCOCKS-LIVE AT THE ROXY CLUB, APRIL 2, 1977 (Absolutely Free UK): There's a lot of nostalgia surrounding Buzzcocks recent reunion tour of America, but here's one new piece of nostalgia that's for fanatics only. Guitarist **STEVE DIGGLE** claims they only played The Roxy this once (the Roxy was the 1st "punk only" club, in London's Covent Garden). The gig was recorded for the Live at The Roxy LP that was later released featuring Buzzcocks, **WIRE**, **X-RAY SPEX**, **SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS**, **ADVERTS**, **JOHNNY MOPED** and **UNWANTED**, most of whom were playing their first gigs. Buzzcocks' 2 songs, neither of which appear on this new LP, "Love Battery" and "Breakdown," sound positively awful. These 10 additions 12 years later fare no better. When confronted with this absolutely shabby guitar sound in our interview (issue 23), Diggle blamed it on the crap guitars they had then, the kind that cost $12, and it wasn't even his, he had to borrow it! This was both a joke and a statement of sorts in a time when all the big bands had the most expensive equipment, a seemingly insurmountable financial barrier for most people who wanted to form bands, but some months later the Buzzcocks had state of the art gear too when they signed to United Artists, improving their sound immeasurably! The fact that they're so badly out of tune on a number of songs like "Get on Our Own" also doesn't help; neither does the fact that this was one of the first ever gigs with the newly revamped B-cocks, with Diggle moving from bass to 2nd guitar, **GARTH SMITH** coming in on bass, and **PETE SHELLEY** taking over the vocals from the departed **HOWARD DEVOTO** (who by then had formed **MAGAZINE**). The band is nowhere near being tight yet, nothing like the astounding powerhouse they became 7 months later on their UA debut "Orgasm Addict" (which is particularly inept here!), or thereafter when **STEVE GARVEY** replaced the fired Garth. So what's the value here, if any? Merely, for pure educational value, we learn yet again that even the greatest bands stink when they first start! If you value B-cocks further by hearing how laughably incompetent and thrashy they were, you'll find this reassuredly charming. Certainly the songs, attitude and electric environment are already there! But if you're not a big fan, don't go anywhere near this! Head straight for the ROIR Lest We Forget live cassette or to the upcoming live in Hamburg final gig video (we also hear another old live LP is being contemplated). This is just for a good giggle! **NOTE:** Sleeve says "First in a forthcoming series." Oh no!?!? (36 Hanway St., London W1)

ED KUEPPER-EVERYBODY'S GOT TO (Capitol), "Too Many Clues," "Nothing Changes in My House" (True Tone/EMI Aus): After two pretty good acoustic based solo LPs, Kupper finally breaks out with the album we've been waiting for! Kuepper of course was **CHRIS BAILEY**'s guitarist and songwriting partner in **THE SAINTS** on their first 3 LPs ('73-'78), and he doesn't even mind ripping himself off on "Too Many Clues," which borrows the horn parts from Saints' '78 classic "Know Your Product." He's also the man who gave us **LAUGHING CLOWNS** from '79-'85, and though he's not as jazzy as those days, his new style does seem like a fresh new mix of his older bands. The LP is so good, there's already 4 singles from it (2 reviewed last time), he must be Australia's Michael Jackson or something. The title track swings evocatively, "Too Many Clues" is a straight on rocker, "When There's This Party" and the favorite "Burned My Fingers" (which still reminds of more recent Saints, funny enough) mix Kuepper's jagged edge with some of his best songs to date. Overall, the thing that's great is Kuepper's self-production. His first LP for a major in 11 years, it sounds like more time and better studios were used, the mix is bold, the singing characteristically deadpan, the acoustic harsh, the horns full, the female backing soulful, the electric guitar sharp as a needle (Kuepper is a world class player), and the bass and drums are tight. The sound is excellent, the right time for Ed's best material. A breakthrough LP from an old favorite who's kept a too low profile (outside of Oz) for too long. This should change that. **NOTE:** "Too many Clues" like "When There's This Party," has no non-LP b-side. Damn! The 4 song "Nothing Changes" 12" does have two though, one of which "At Times, So Emotional" makes the $7 Aussie import price worth it if you really dig the album. The other, "(Queen of) Winter Hotel" is pretty good too.



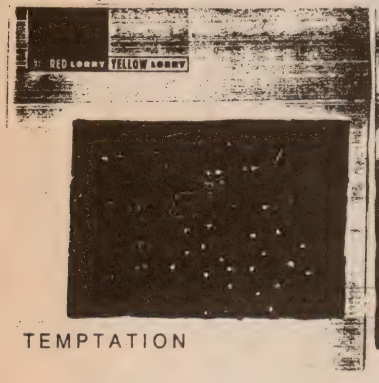
(19)AVENGERS-"Paint It Black" 45 reissue

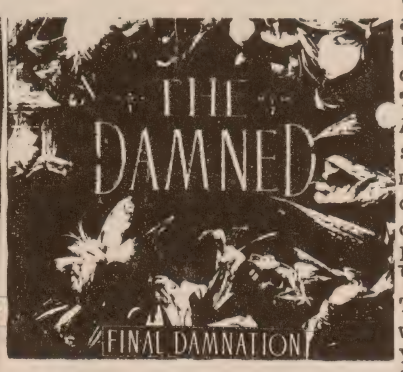
(20)PAULINE MURRAY-STORM CLOUDS LP (FIRST IN 8 YRS)

THE AVENGERS-"Paint it Black (CD Presents): Reissue, this time with a picture sleeve of single released in 1983, two album cuts from that year's Avengers' LP retrospective. In recent interviews, singer **PENELOPE HOUSTON** has said that this LP was without her cooperation and consent. Nevertheless, it remains one of the finest US punk LPs of all time, if sadly released 4 years after the group's exit, and albeit a compilation of the band's one single and EP + a half dozen unreleased tracks rather than a proper LP. "Paint it Black" exposes **THE STONES** to the raw buzz they had in '66 (that they do not have in '89, thank you!) with punk's wall of gutiar greatness. "Thin White Line" is another Pistolian dive bomb. Get the album instead of this single, get this if you can't find that. But a hell of a nice pic sleeve, at least, and a hell of a good excuse to review the Avengers, don't you think?! This band was something special. (1230 Grant Ave., Suite 531, SF, CA 94133)

PAULINE MURRAY-STORM CLOUDS, "This Thing Called Love" (Cat and Mouse UK): Pauline Murray's 1st LP in 8 years is a nice surprise. Unfortunately, we already knew 1/2 of it from the last four singles, including the new pre-LP single "This Thing Called Love" which nicely leads off this tasteful album. However, it's a safe bet that very few of you picked up Murray's singles the last four years or so, so this won't seem at all familiar. Besides, it's all so luscious and attractive, it's good to have it as an LP. **ALEX CHILTON**'s "Holocaust," her great comeback single, is the centerpiece, a piece so unnerving yet lovely, it pricks up your attention right away. Other old favorites like "New Age" and "Close Watch" mingle well with equally delightful new ones like "Pressure Zone" and "Don't Give Up." This LP will particularly surprise those who know Murray from her three albums with Manchester punks **PENETRATION** (her boyfriend from that band, bassist **ROBERT BLAMIRE**, is still recording with her, nice to say). Nor is their much evidence of the darker

edges of **PAULINE MURRAY & THE INVISIBLE GIRLS** (those records are collectors items for fans of **BUZZCOCKS** and **SISTERS OF MERCY/MISSION**, since **WAYNE HUSSEY** and **JOHN MAHER** play on them!). Murray is older, probably wiser, and inclined to make music to wrap up and take home to a friend, a little personal treasure of modest gems. And she still has one of those voices that's so wonderful you wonder why she toils in obscurity while talentless morons like Transmission Vamp are all the rage. Try this out. **NOTE:** Non-LP flip of single "Mr. Money" is also great, sorry it was left off LP. (PO Box 59, London N22 4NS, UK)



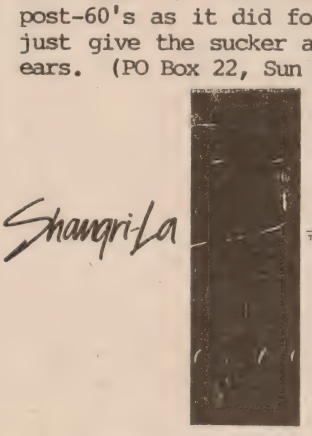


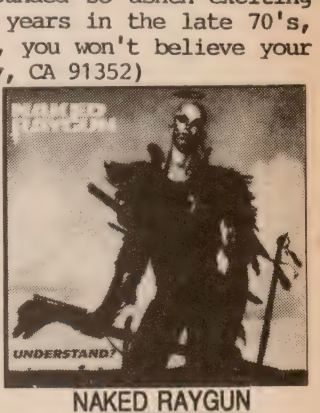
(21)RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY-"TEMPTATION" 45

(22)THE DAMNED-FINAL DAMNATION REUNION LIVE

RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY-"Temptation" (Situation Two UK): If this is an indication of what's on the new LP Drop, then they'll be 4 for 4 in albums! Couldn't stop playing "Hands Off Me" from last year's Nothing Wrong, it's great to see **CHRIS REED** is definately committed to singing nicer, in the upper parts of his range, as opposed to the intent, dark, lower registers he used exclusively when barking his way through "Shout at the Sky," "Talk About the Weather," "Chance," "Beating My Head" and all their other great pre '88 songs. Other guitarist **WOLFIE** has an ear for a forceful, stabbing yet somehow attractive line behind Reed's rhythm guitar, and the pair's songwriting has not slowed down, but has improved with age. Few bands have made so many consistently great 45's and this is a gem, a pop gem (as befits their current style). It's such a good development to see The Lorries go pop without changing their sound, now 8 years strong of well made, challenging, now wonderful records. Bring on Drop. **NOTE:** B-side "Don't Know Why" is presumedly non-LP and is like a cross between "Walking on Your Hands" and "My Generation" with a nice skipping "I'm on Fire" chorus. Say it ain't so! Yep, another $4 worth spending. Oh well. Keep 'em coming! (Lorries info: POBox HP2, Leeds, LS6 1LN UK)

THE DAMNED-FINAL DAMNATION; REUNION CONCERT, LONDON TOWN & COUNTRY, JUNE 13, 1988 (Essential/Castle Communications UK) DAMNED, DAMNED, DAMNED reissue (Frontier US): 4th Damned live LP, and 3rd neccessary one, to compliment their 7 studio LPs, 2 Peel Session EPs, + innumerable greatest hits samplers. This LP captures the first reunion show ever by the original **BRIAN JAMES/DAVE VANIAN/CAPTAIN SENSIBLE/RAT SCABIES** lineup, the same one that blitzed through New York and the rest of the US in July of this year (see live review). This first reunion was to be part of the Amnesty International benefit stadium show at Milton Keynes Bowl the following week, so 2 Town and Country gigs were booked as a tuneup (The US tour this year was a farewell tour as a parting gesture to the final breakup of the current Vanian/Scabies/**ROMAN JUGG/BRYN MERRICK** Damned). The band is well rehearsed, sounding far better on this first album (and first 2 singles) material than they originally did at CBGB's 12 years ago! For one thing, they're consistently in tune! The sound quality is first rate (if not as red hot explosive as the definitive Damned live LP, '80's Live at Shepperton, 1/2 of which was originally released as side 4 of the import double LP The Black Album). The set comes catapulting out with the molten "See Her Tonight" and detonates the rest of Damned Damned Damned. "Fish" busts loose from the 10 years of dust it's collected since it last amazed a live audience. "New Rose" and it's flipside "Help!" (yep **THE BEATLES'** one) make the past sound damn present. "Born to Kill," "I Fall" **IGGY AND THE STOOGES'** "1970" (Retitled by Damned as "I Feel Alright") and the cooler than shit "Fan Club" are simarly searing and soaring. Side 2 finds Sensible moved from bass to guitar, with **PAUL GREY** (late of **EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS**, more recently in **UFO!**) on bass. This lineup runs through Machine Gun Ettiquette ('79) and Black Album ('80) classics, "Love Song," "Smash it Up" "I Just Can't Be Happy Today," "Wait For The Blackout," and more, climaxing with their usual destruction of **MC5**'s "Looking at You" and the surprise clobbering of **ROLLING STONES'** "The Last Time." The versions on Live at Shepperton blow this away, but still this is great to hear! A wonderful live album of a historical and great current event! **NOTES1:** 2 most obviously missing tracks are "1 of the 2," one of the first album's finest moments, and "Plan Nine Channel 7" which was always a highlight of the later Damned's NY sets. **NOTES2:** Other essential live LP is Captain's Birthday; Live at The Roundhouse 1978, which documents 2nd LP Music For Pleasure 5 piece Damned (with Lu Edmunds) (15/16 Northfields Prospect/Putney Bridge Rd., London SW18 1PE UK)*****As for the reissue, hey, that is '77 Brit scene's first ever punk album, and along with The Sex Pistols, Wire, Saints, X-Ray Spex, Adverts, Clash, and Buzzcocks first efforts, remains one of the most compelling rock albums of all time. Need more be said? Just stare once again at the pie all over the Damned's faces or at Captain Sensible's Halston dress, and you'll remember, not only was that a once in a life time musical and cultural explosion of free expression at last, but a once in a life time music too! Rock 'n' roll never sounded so ashen exciting post-60's as it did for two years in the late 70's, just give the sucker a spin, you won't believe your ears. (PO Box 22, Sun Valley, CA 91352)





(23)SHANGRI-LA KINKS' TRIBUTE LP

(24)NAKED RAYGUN-4TH LP, UNDERSTAND?

SHANGRI-LA; A TRIBUTE TO **THE KINKS** (Imaginary UK/Skyclad US): Best Imaginary tribute sampler of the 4 so far, better even than the **BYRDS, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART** and **SYD BARRETT** ones with less famous,

lesser known talent. Manchester's **MOCK TURTLES** have the best track as always, an absolutely booming version of "Big Sky" (from '68, The Kinks are The Village Green Preservation Society, along with '69's Aurther the Kinks' greatest LP), a truly modern rendition with all the old power. Actually they're tied for best with **THE REEGS** (please see review elsewhere) for "See My Friends" which is equally colossal. **THE CATERAN** set "Tired of Waiting" on fire ('65, single and Kinda Kinks), punking it up like the original never existed! And **THE THUNDERBYRDS** dig up a 60's obscuro known only to Kinkaholic bootleg collectors (most recently the OK BBC Sessions one Kontraband), "This Strange Effect," louder, but just as melancholy. **THE CARDIACS** even dredge up what was really a **DAVE DAVIES'** solo single (backed by Kinks), "Suzannah's Still Alive." The rest is quite good too, if a little too close to the originals (particularly New Jersey's own **CROCODILE SHOP**, who add little to "I Need You" ('65, b-side "Set Me Free") 'cept some out of place squeal metal leads). Only one track is bad, **THE PATCH UP BOYS** ridiculous deconstruction of "Big Black Smoke," ('66, b-side "Dead End Street") and two others are too hazy to do justice to the songs, **WOLFHOUNDS'** "I'm Not Like Everybody Else,"('66, b-side "Sunny Afternoon") which we expected better from the artist that brought us "Anti-Midas Touch," and **CUD's** industrialized "Lola" ('70, single, Lola vs. Powerman and The Moneygoround). But what more could one want? Best of all are the smart selections, with the exception of "Lola" and "Tired of Waiting," most of the greatest hits are neglected! No "All Day and All The Night" (see Stranglers), no "You Really Got Me," no "Victoria" (don't see Fall), no "Waterloo Sunset, no "David Watts" (see Jam). And only one post 60's era selection, **THE CHESTERFIELD KINGS'** "Live Life." These bands are fans! Real fans! And it shows! **RAY DAVIES**, Dave Davies, **MICK AMORY** and **PETE QUALFE** should be proud! Other artists: **TURN TO FLOWERS, THANES, FLESHTONES, DROOGS.** (6 Valley Brook Dr., Middlesex, NJ 08846)

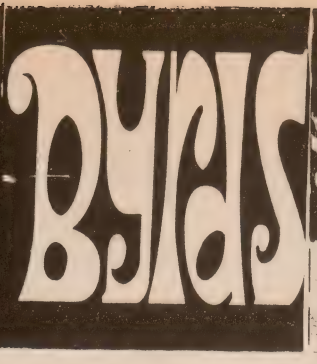
NAKED RAYGUN-UNDERSTAND? (Caroline): The last LP with **JOHN HAGGERTY** on guitar is unfortunately the least of their four, but it's still quite good. As with Jettison, the problem isn't as much quality as editing. Some of the material would slot well on any Raygun greatest hits tape one might make, while others are merely OK. This time 'round, the boss tunes are the opening "Treason," which may be their best recording ever (reviewed last time as a single), "Hip's Swinging" with it's "Check me out ya know I'm a major world power" lyrics, and "Never Follow" which features a nasty, effective "voice from hell," vocalist **JEFF PEZZATI** through some heavy effects. Then there's the ending "Which Side You're On," which borrows heavily from a song they often cover, **BUZZCOCKS'** "Harmony in my Head" (writer **STEVE DIGGLE** isn't consulting an attorney as far as we know, though), but easily forgiving this, it's full throttle Raygun until the abrupt ending, one so sudden Caroline Records felt the need to warn the record buyer that that was what the group submitted as opposed to a mastering defect. Now, again, it isn't that the other cuts aren't good, or that you won't enjoy hearing them ("OK Wait" and "The Sniper Song" have solid passages), and for sure the sound is vintage NR, but songwriting wise perhaps, some of these could have had better hooks, something NR regularly dines on. Special mention for "Wonder Beer" for it's good-time chummy singalong chorus, at least a fine piece of fun fluff. Interesting to see the effect competent replacement **BILL STEVENS** will have on their next studio effort. (114 W. 26th St., NY, NY 10001)

(25)BLACKBIRD-2ND SELF TITLED LP

(26)HARDONS-"JUST BEING WITH YOU" 45

BLACKBIRD-BLACKBIRD (Iloki): 2nd LP (both self-titled so bound to cause confusion. The first one was red, this one is black) is a terrific improvement over intriguing debut. While there's nothing here to match the sheer brilliance of the first LP's closing wonder "Quicksand," the songwriting is much better overall, and the experimentation takes place behind the songs rather than in between them as per last time. Of course, Blackbird is the 3rd completely different guise taken by two founding fathers (actually brothers) of the US punk explosion **CHIP** and **TONY KINMAN** late of **THE DILS** ('76-'79) and the countryish **RANK AND FILE** ('80-'87). Now they drone and pound, twist and claw, discombobulate and decompose what are actually well written tunes with bassist Tony's ever pure, melodic low bass singing. Unlike so many noise outfits, Tony never screams, he sings damned it, and sings as if he wants you to join him! Imagine the almost demonic underpinnings of the less-pop side of **LOU REED** (Blackbird covers **VELVET UNDERGROUND**'s "What Goes On" here), only gnashed through a modern guitar wall. Chip still manages to stay away from gothic dirge despite the mildly dark material by riffing solidly and twidling the knobs just enough to transform music into an out of control paranoia! Even when Chip lends his lighter voice to the pop "Mary's World," the heavy tones of Blackbird still squash the listener like the smoosh of a steamroller. Simple duo: guitar, bass, methodical background drum machine. Simply remarkable results. **NOTE:** Rank and File drummer **SLIM EVANS** co-writes "Black Vibration" and once again takes cover photos. (PO Box 49593, LA, CA 90049)

THE HARDONS-"Just Being With You" (Waterfront AUS): First genuinely great Hardons single. Sure the Ramones fixation remains, but they've slowed down, gained some poise and control, and have written two really good songs (flip is "Growing Old") for a change! Never thought they could make such a classic punk single, up there with any of your favorites of a decade (and more) ago, we kid you not! But they have, and it's as catchy as chicken pox. The vocals couldn't be mixed any lower; they're so barely there you'll check your speakers thinking they've blown, that voice is absolutely decimated by the guitar and it doesn't suffer for it, with a winning melody like this you'll make the effort, you'll pay the undistracted attention required to hear it more than just subconciously! Could this be a new Hardons? Alas no (see unimpressed live review), but this single forces us to take them seriously, as capable of making a slew of more great records if they so choose. Let's hope so. Hear this. **NOTE:** I believe the a-side is on the new Taang U.S. LP, if you don't have $5-$6 AUS import price!



(27)XTC-"THE LOVING" 45 (NON LP FLIP) (28)SYD BARRETT-OPEL ARCHIVES LP (29)TIME BETWEEN BYRDS TRIBUTE LP (30)JELLO BIAFRA-HIGH PRIESTS HARMFUL MATTER

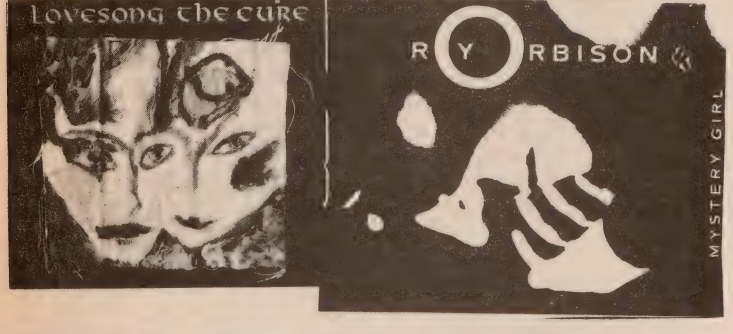
XTC-"The Loving" (Virgin UK): 3rd single from double LP Oranges and Lemons is the right choice, probably the best song on the whole package. If you can keep from singing along with the "the love-hing" choruses, than "mister you're a better man than I." Three loud boos to Virgin and XTC for making the 7" b-side "Cynical Days." Yes it's one of the best LP tracks, another great one by bassist **COLIN MOULDING**, but it means that you have to blow the whole $7 for the 12" in order to get the non-LP cut, "The World is Full of Angry Young Men." Yes it's good enough, you'll want it if you're an XTC fan, a piano edged jazzy folk ballad with philosphical "you only get out of it what you put into it" stance. Cursed talents, XTC, do they think we're made of money? IF the world is full of angry young men, it's cause $7 is a hell of a lot for one song! Money, where do you fly?

SYD BARRETT-OPEL (Harvest/EMI UK): It's always a thrill to discover there's more outtakes and unreleased songs by your favorite old artists lying around in some studio somewhere, and somebody from their old labels has the brainstorm to actually go in and get 'em for us! Sure enough, with unused tracks from both of Barrett's 2 solo albums, his first ever solo sessions in 1968, some rough 2 track demos and unembellished original guitar/vocal tracks, this is a goldmine for Barrett heads. The only thing missing is more of Barrett's incredible excursions through psychedelic rock, like The Madcap Laughs' "No Good Trying," or all the best **PINK FLOYD** classics ("See Emily Play," "Arnold Layne," and the incomparable 1st 2 LPs, must buys for the newly curious Barrett fan, especially Piper at The Gates of Dawn, 1967), with the exception of the original version of "Octopus" which then was known as "Clowns and Jugglers." But, perhaps more than anyone else save the younger Bob Dylan, no one was more a weapon with nothing but an acoustic guitar and his voice. The Peel Sessions EP released two years ago is perhaps better than this (stuff like "Gigolo Aunt" say), but still enough of this is as playful yet bonechilling as all Barrett's acoustic tracks of the time ("Terrapin" comes to mind). Check out this sparce original version of "Dark Globe" (then titled "Wouldn't You Miss Me," this is the song **REM**, or I should say **MIKE STIPE** acapella covered on their recent tour). An unusual artist whose weird spin on a simple song has never since been equalled, even by his army of imitators.

TIME BETWEEN; A TRIBUTE TO THE BYRDS (Imaginary/Communion/Skyclad): Imaginary comes through again. with their uncanny ability to pick the classic artists and match up their less heralded tracks with just the right non-superstar modern talent. Most hip new music fans know **RICHARD THOMPSON**, **DINOSAUR JR.**, **MIRACLE LEGION**, **THE CHILLS**, **ICICLE WORKS**, **BARACCUDAS**, **THIN WHITE ROPE** and **GIANT SAND** (+ **NIGEL AND THE CROSSES** is a pseudonym for **REM**'s **PETE BUCK** and **ROBYN HITCHCOCK**), but it's the earnest, inspired and truly creative efforts of relative newcomers like Australia's **MOFFS**, Scotland's **CATERAN** and Manchester's **MOCK TURTLES** that make this come alive. In particular, the opening Moffs' version of "8 Miles High" has the unfortunate task of competing with both the transcendental original single (about a plane trip, not a drug trip! Though Byrds were stoned a lot back then!) and the bombing run **HUSKER DU** did on it 5 years ago, but they not only manage, they soar so gracefully they are like Birds themselves, such a lovely "See Emily Play"-like guitar line! Mock Turtles are 4 for 4 on these Imaginary comps, "Time Between/Why" is unusually jangly for them, showing a new side without redoing the song as it was. Cateran add their punk edge to "She Don't Care About Time," and a true unknown, **THE STATIC** drag "It Happens Every Day" kicking and screaming in a slooooooow roll. **PRIMEVALS** fuzz up "Thoughts and Words" nicely, and Thompson (you know, **FAIRPORT CONVENTION**), **CLIVE GREGSON and CHRISTINE COLLISTER** have the right country folk mood for "Here Without You." Dinosaur's otherwise knockout "I'll Feel A Whole Lot Better" (faster and grittier than **3 O'Clock's** solid version 6 years ago) is badly marred by the intentionally ridiculous response backing vocals, **J. MARCIS** should have sung by himself! Too bad! New Haven's Miracle Legion give "Mr. Spaceman" the bouncy "ride" it deserves while slightly altering the chorus vocals to update it. Chills? Of course they're great. Of course they lift up "Draft Morning," making it float like a leaf on a breeze, an undulating spiral. Oh so passionately lovely! Baraccudas are a little too reverent about recreating **ROGER MCGUINN's** 16 string Rickenbacker sound, and their vocals are too harsh, but "King Apathy III" is alright. Giant Sand and Icicle Works are characteristically dull, if more listenable than usual, on "Change is Now" and "Triad/Chestnut Mare" respectively (why did they waste the classic "Chestnut Mare" on these mundane synthpopsters?) and Buck and Hitchcock combine to deliver "Wild Mountain Thyme." An LP as varied and as well crafted as the Byrds' own. Brilliantly conceived (PO Box 95265, Atlanta, GA 30347)

JELLO BIAFRA-HIGH PREIST OF HARMFUL MATTER (Alternative Tentacles): An extraordinary experience. In place of his first spoken word album No More Cocoon's standup skits and parodies, as expected, Biafra tells the story of his ordeal, from the raid on his lodgings on April 15, 1986, to his arrest two months later, through his trial which lasted 'til late 1987. The first two sides of the double LP inform us of the conservative climate we find ourselves submerged in, with an update on each new infringement on the 1st Ammendment by well organized, completely funded right wing and religious

fundamentalist groups. Whereas the indispensible literature that accompanies the LP (a 3rd issue of No More Censorship, Fuck Facts etc.) is cumbersome, laborous, and somewhat discouraging in its weight, the flashes of humor Biafra carefully laces into his always interesting monologue make the bad news and the misgivings more palatable. I.E., hear the records before doing the reading! In particular, his imitations of his adversaries at his trial and at the PMRC are uproarious, as is his pointed descriptions of their hypocritical manners and the irony everpresent in their actions. Best example is the prosecutor **Michael Guarino** dramatizing his closing argument (that the Frankenchrist **H.R. Geiger** poster is indeed obscene and, in violation of the California penal code, is "harmful to minors") by holding up the "offending" poster for all the courtroom to view, including 15 minors in attendance! Biafra is not only convincing and funny throughout, but he scores points with his convictions on the value of art and freedom of expression that he and his co-defendents so vigourously fought for and (thankfully) sucessfully defended, with the help of $80,000 raised by their defense fund. The trial against Biafra should remind us that this battle is far beyond the people of Los Angeles vs. Jello Biafra and friends, but is an endless confrontation extending back to the beginning of history. Or does the name **D.H. Lawrence** and Lady Chatterly's Lover ring a bell? Or, as pointed out in this mag before, was not **Socrates** put to his death for harming minors with his ideas, to name two famous court cases that were lost by truly gifted minds and artists? By infusing his story with both zest, and a great deal of humor, Biafra's record is as thoroughly enjoyable to listen to and laugh at, as it is to rally one's "Sense of decency" (what **Joe McCarthy**, whose name pops up throughout this double LP, was rightfully accused of not having) and shock over the tactics employed by our "free" country to intimidate and silence those who truly put to use the freedoms they've been granted by the Constitution. As **Joe Strummer** once said, "You have the right to free speech, unless of course you're dumb enough to actually try it!" A scream, a howl, and more cause for thinking than one can imagine. Study if you value your rights.



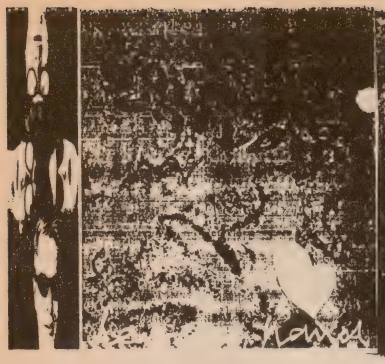
(31)THE CURE-"LOVE SONG" 45

(32)ROY ORBISON-POST-HUMOUS MYSTERY GIRL LP

THE CURE-"Fascination Street," (Elektra/WEA) "Love Song" (Fiction/Polydor UK): Negligent me still hasn't bought Distintegration yet, but I have been happily keeping up with the 45s. "Fascination Street" is the best Cure single since "Charlotte Sometimes," in its ability (we thought lost by Cure) to absolutely knock you out of your comfy sofa in wonderous horror (remember "Give Me It," particularly the live version on Concert though the studio version from The Top will suffice too. This is its evil twin!). Yeah sure, it's exactly the same bass line as that fluffy, toothless single from Head on The Door, "Close to Me" only with a completely different drum beat. It's OK for **ROBERT SMITH** to rip himself off, particularly making a whole different sound and song out of it. Where "Close to Me" skipped too merrily along without any punch, this pounds into your head like a tense walk through a pitch black alley, where you're making the only sounds and you feel you're being watched (like Three Imaginary Boys/Boys Don't Cry's "Subway Song!"), that bass slams into you, and the desperation and fright in Smith's voice is so apparent as he walks through the rubble on "opening night in fascination street." Huge, big, monstrous. This is The Cure '89? Best since Pornography! B-side is same as UK "Lullabye" single, the non-LP "Babble" which again makes either's purchase neccessary. Almost as good as the a-side, and just as gut-wrenching and spooky. "Love Song" reminds of the overcast mood of Faith, almost undercutting Smith's declaration of eternal passion. A light alternative, yet not lightweight! This is also an LP single, so checking out the non-LP flip "Lace," we find an uptempo rocker with swirling keyboard and singsong vocals. Sorry folks, another $4 that's probably worth it. Can we help it if these people insist on issuing quality b-sides? So you don't get rolls for dinner this week, it's worth the sacrifice. As for me, I think it's about time I headed for Disintergration, what takes me so long!???

ROY ORBISON-MYSTERY GIRL (Virgin): Not a great record, but as mentioned in last issue's Brian Wilson review, when it comes to new albums by oldtimers, even an OK one is a bit of a shock. Mystery Girl is sadly released posthumously, which makes this more than decent final effort stand out all the more. There's even three songs that one could place on a tape of one's personal Orbison favorites. "You Got It" is the first one, the single chosen to commemorate the late great singer for a now grieving public (we'll ignore the fact that the same fickle public didn't know he existed the last twenty years, save for a Linda Ronstadt cover or two ("Blue Bayou") . "You Got It" is a fitting remembrance, so good it cuts through **Jeff Lynne**'s too lush ELO production. Every time Orbison sings that heavy "baby" at the end of each chorus, it makes you think of the first time you ever heard "In Dreams" (during the Blue Velvet movie for most young people, sorry to say) or "Only The Lonely," this is a great singer whose voice held up 'til the day he died! "California Blue" and the **Bono** produced "She's a Mystery to Me" are the other two gems here, but nothing is so bad you need to skip it. From "Ooby Doobie" in 1955 to the end, Orbison was a wonder voice; forever he will be remembered as just about the only great rock 'n' roll guy going (along with some of the tough girl groups) in the post '59, post rock payola scandal, pre-Beatles Philadelphia Schlock era (death to Dick Clark and his stable of Anka and Avalon etc.) when rock 'n roll and r'n'b were counted for dead like all other youth fads. R.I.P. Roy Orbison, thanks for the music, including some of this. A haunting, eternal voice.

WE ARE GOING TO EAT YOU-"Heart in Hand" (Cat in Mouse UK): Dynamic debut 4 song 12" by a UK quartet that seems destined to be signed any minute by the UK majors. Gorgeous **JULIE SORRELL** is a talented singer and if this is their first studio outing (they've finished an LP since, as yet not released), we're on to something here. The guitars and songs come straight at you as in the best of punk, but the kinetic haze in the guitar sound, Sorrell's superb clear singing (bearing a minor, odd resemblance to label mate Pauline Murray), and the impressive songwriting make them a more modern meal. Their material is far better than the

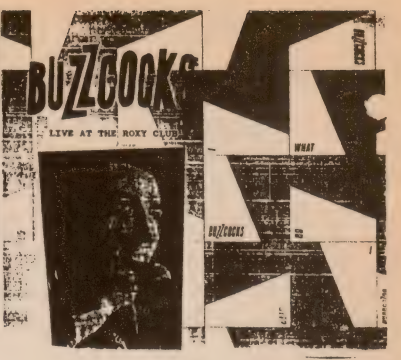


(33)WE ARE GOING TO EAT YOU-DEBUT 45

(34)EDWYN COLLINS-HOPE AND DESPAIR LP

FUGAZI

(35)FUGAZI-MARGIN WALKER EP



BUZZCOCKS-LIVE AT THE ROXY 1977 LP

currently more famous female led UK groups (Darling Buds, Primitives, etc.), and they have an insistence and a vitality those too-perfectly-groomed aforementioned lack or abandoned. The hot number here (no, not Sorrell, I mean the songs!) is "Just Another One (Who Got it Wrong)," which will sear into you like a carving knife into a Thanksgiving turkey. Jump on the bandwagon; for once it's going to be a long ride! (POB 59, London N22 4NS)

EDWYN COLLINS-Hope and Despair (Demon UK): Never lost interest in old Edwyn, but still, after the eye opening Postcard singles like "Falling and Laughing" and the inspired tunes(like that wonder "Felicity") on the first LP You Can't Hide Your Love Forever, ORANGE JUICE largely coasted on their well deserved reputation, producing 2 more mediocre albums and an equally below-average EP. "What Presence," Rip it Up" and a few others had the old spark, but what excuse is there for "Lean Period," "L.O.V.E."etc.? Similarly, after the smart solo debut (not including the attractive "Pale Blue Eyes" duet with PAUL QUINN of BOURGIE BOURGIE in '85) of "Don't Shilly Shally," he started to backpeddle again, but Hope and Despair is pulling the chestnuts out of the fire! Getting AZTEC CAMERA Postcard mate RODDY FRAME and the greatest drummer in the world DAVE RUFFY (RUTS/AZTEC CAMERA/LUCY SHOW etc.) as well as BERNIE CLARKE and DENNIS BOVELL to play is an important step in the right direction, adding a supple and strong backing Edwyn hasn't enjoyed in years. But really, the most important thing is that Collins has regained his long lost songwriting skill. His old soft touch sets up his famed crooning ability with sympathetic material like "Pushing it To The Back of my Mind," the title track, or the closest thing to an OJ barn burner "Darling They Want it All." That Collins had a great album in the bag is not startling, but a ultra-pleasant development nevertheless. Welcoming back old friends is the nicest thing about following music; this is also one of the nicest albums you'll hear all year! (no address)

FUGAZI-MARGIN WALKER EP (Dischord): Much the same as last time around. Nothing as harrowing as "Suggestion," but they're further solidifying their rhythmic spices, fed by the exceptional bass/drums of JOE LALLY and BRENDAN CANTY. The looping sound on "And The Same" is all theirs, a true underpinning for the short blasts of IAN MACAYE's guitar and his trademark controlled primal scream vocals, an attribute also in evidence in GUY PICCIOTTO's singing. "Burning Too" is the expected Ruts' like reggae/rocker, the kind that sets their audiences bopping. "Provisional" is dissonant, "Lockdown" is manic, and the ending "Promises" has the slow crunch of a steamroller crushing a fat waterbug. "We will do what we do" is MacKaye's final reminder, and after 9 years and some great bands, we believe him. Two EPs now for Fugazi, more to come. (3819 Beecher St. NW, Wash. DC 20007)

OTHER RECORDS OF INTEREST

THE BATS-DADDY'S HIGHWAY(Flying Nun/Communion/Skyclad): Communion/Skyclad has the foresight to make The Bats 1st LP available at domestic rather than the typical New Zealand import prices of $13 to $14. If you haven't heard Bats or their excellent "Block of Wood" 7" that starts off this debut LP, their music is disarmingly quiet and repetitive. While live this worked slightly against them, causing unintended drowsiness, on record late at night when you're tired it's as effective as a hot towel or Sleepy Time herbal tea. The vocal harmonies of the two guitarists, ROBERT SCOTT and KAYE WOODWARD are nice enough, as all male/female duets should be, but the real deal is the two's almost spiritual interplay song after song, peaceful, gentle, effortless, and ultimately soothing. Can't imagine ever listening to this when in the mood to "rock out," they simply posess no power at all but for their subtle kindness. But that's enough, don't you think, particularly coexisting with all their louder, blasting brethren? Pillow rock is rarely this good. (PO Box 95265, Atlanta, GA 30347)

THE BLASES-THE BLASES (Permanent Rave): New Jersey's Blases have been around for years in different lineups, and this is their first LP. Quite a nice little debut it is, unassuming, unaffected pop ditties to liven up your drive time. What really gets me is BILL DONOHUE's piano, which pumps along with each poptune, a cheery edge that makes the material stand out. His work recalls the best of THE DAMNED's ROMAN JUGG on Strawberries and Phantasmagoria, particularly on the New Brunswick radio favorite "Firefighter." The other 3, guitar (ROB WAGNER) bass (JOE DELORENZO) and drums (ROB ANGELLO) are tight and unusually clean. Another band that can rock while still sounding gentle about it! Don't miss "Time Walks Away," a truly graceful instant hit, and the opening "I Walk Alone," another strong chorus. (PO Box 28, Sayreville, NJ 08872)

CROCODILE SHOP-LULLABY (Susstones): Proof that we all grow up sometime, if we want to. 2/3 of New Jersey's Crocodile Shop were once MOD FUN, an OK but overly derivative Mod group. With the name change came the more modern sounding Head 12" EP, but this tops that obviously formative effort. Lullaby is produced intelligently by former CHAMELEONS (Current REEGS) guitarist DAVE FIELDING (who did a similar decent job with the 1st INSPIRAL CARPETS EP and the 2nd MONKEY RUN single), flown in all the way from Manchester, UK to Hoboken to

do the job. Fielding's sense of mood and of timeless space enhance Croc Shop's now ethereal material. Where once they just strummed teen pop anthems, this is an eery, not so cheery, bleary eyed look at the quieter side, with chilling feedback over post-punk drums and bass, and the windy sound of **MICHAEL HALE**'s voice. Hale himself is vastly improving; he still has an bad tendency to sing way out of tune, which is unusually distracting. But his voice itself is more convincing, sounding vaguely like The Lucy Show's Rob Vandeven. Besides, it's Hale's unpredictable and fascinating guitar work that sustains the record's interest throughout, he's talented. This is not a breakthrough LP; better vocals and mildly improved songwriting (hopefully just around the corner) will be necessary before they make one. Nevertheless, this is a challenging, strong LP, one you'd have thought them uncapable of. Was it underestimation or flowering? No doubt both. Bravo. (POB 6425, Minneapolis, MN 55406)

THE CROWD-BIG FISH STORIES (Flipside): One of the least noticed yet most pleasant punk reunions of late. Few current music fans probably remember The Crowd, as their popularity seemed more a historical period piece, important only to the brief "Beach-punk" scene that reared its ugly head 'round the turn of the decade. The Crowd were a fun band, whose happy go lucky sound, real, honest energy and pleasant **JIM DECKER** vocals put the lie to the more violent, destructive youth that killed the creativity of this once vibrant early punk community (giving us disgraceful, fortunately forgotten bands like Circle One, and fight-scarred clubs like The Fleetwood). After the glorious punk/wave sounds of their tracks on the excellent Beach Blvd. sampler (with **RIK L. Rik** and **SIMPLETONES**) it seemed that the The Crowd lost their edge on their one LP, the pretty good A World Apart in 1980 on Poshboy Records. Perhaps this was a reaction to the excesses of the new punks, and perhaps the lack of a new audience for their new direction helped 'cause their split. But now they're back, and the new LP seems a great marriage of the original days tenacity with the later LP's more interesting songwriting. The band is still unafraid to try different styles, changing tempos, working in hints of reggae, and even covering **JOY DIVISION**'s old "Transmission" single, the better precursor to later New order dance sound. The lineup is the same as the 1980 LP, the two Decker brothers, Jim and **JAY** on vocals and bass respectively, **JAMES KAA** on wonderful guitar, and ex-**FLYBOYS** drummer **DENNIS WALSH** (who, when in Flyboys, went under the amusing name of Dennis Racket!). OK, same band, better recordings, it's a wonder that a decade later they've perfected their craft, a sound that could appeal to older punks while easily attracting the more typical new music/college radio/alternative fans. Good for The Crowd, hope to catch one of their shows in LA one of these days. Thanks to Flipside for the foresight and memory to sign up these guys for the succesful 2nd run. Check it out, this ain't no punk revival, this is real. (PO Box 363, Whittier, CA 90608)

DECEPTION BAY-DECEPTION BAY (Independent Projects): Independent Projects has good taste. These 5 long "songs" are recorded live off of the radio, WERS. I say "songs" 'cause they're more patterns; they blend into each other as if they were one song that flows for an entire album. Not much in the way of vocals (they're there, they're just barely noticeable), the bass and drums maintain a dense, quick rhythm, and the guitar feeds back for a solid half hour! The rhythm section is strong, which is what keeps this LP from being a noodling snooze. The bassist (either **JAY DUNN** or **CARL BOLAND**, it doesn't say which) uses a lot of effects (distortion? flanger?) to give his fast, circular loops a real wicked sound, which combines well with **MICHAEL EVANS**' busy drums. **LOUISE MILNE** is listed as guest vocalist; on "For The Season" she drones on like an instrument herself, making Deception Bay sound much like early Public Image Ltd. Restless people like myself want more in the way of songs and melodies (or at least more woven texture a la PIL), but if you get into this it could spin you around for its duration. A very creative piece of music.

DOUGHBOYS-HOME AGAIN (Restless): Veteran Montreal band, who specialize in '77 Gen-X ish punk with in your face, modern production (by **Stephan Egerton** and **Bill Stevenson** of **All**). The vocals are barely noticeable in the mix; it's obvious the guitar battery is their forte, yet there are some good melodies hiding underneath. Montreal's Nils have been mentioning these boys for years as one of the few bands from up there they felt an affinity with, and it does seem rare to find two punk bands in the same city who care as much about good songs as they do about intensity, although Doughboys are wilder (closer to the young Soul Asylum) and lack the supervocals Nils and others of this type have. Maybe this stuff is as old as the hills, but at least those hills have hooks growing out of them. Pretty good. (Restless, Culver City, CA 90231-3628).

THE FALL-"Dead Beat Descendant" (Beggars Banquet UK), SEMINAL LIVE (Beggars Banquet/RCA): What bad can you say about The Fall? That in a career that's lasted 12 years, 18 LPs, 2 EPs and 23 singles, they've made a few crappy records? That throughout those 18 albums, dozens of tracks have missed the mark? That they should have known better than to do such an awful job of **THE KINKS**' "Victoria" and **THE BEATLES**' "A Day in Life," both so bad as to nauseate? Uh huh. So what? Like a steamroller, nothing stops them. The new single is especially good, the hardest hitting Fall record in a while. It's not quite up there with "Totally Wired," "Cruisers Creek" etc. as being one of their greatest moments, but it's still a smashing ear destruction with **MARK E. SMITH**'s ever cool speak-sing ironic delivery. Like all veteran bands of their era, Smith, wife **BRIX** and co. are always capable of twisting you around their bulging thumbs on any given single! Best of all, this song is included on the new domestic Seminal Live, for those of you who can't afford/can't get the imports. The LP is actually only 1/2 live, and the rest of the studio cuts can't match 'Dead Beat Descendant's fiery beginning, but the heat returns on the live side, with unbeatable detonations of "Elf Prefix/L.A." and "Pay Your Rates." The Fall are always at their best when slapping you around. As with all Fall LPs (with few exceptions), the lesser 1/2 of the LP seems boring compared to the better cuts (my apologies, you legions of Fall junkies, you have my ultimate respect), and on the minus side, this live version of "Cruiser's Creek" is surprisingly pale, and the live "Victoria" is still very much an embarassment. But it's worth it when they're cookin'. Or get the UK 45! The b-side "Cab it Up" is pretty good and non-LP too.

THE FAMILY CAT-"Tom Verlaine" (Bad Girl UK): Debut single by London quintet is worth chasing down. They're like a cross between the zinging guitars of the early singles on Zoo Records (like "Pictures on my Wall") and the heavy rhythms of '84 Red Lorry Yellow Lorry, only different from that as well. Heavy, slow, methodical, yet swinging double guitar madness, and simple effective melody. No mention of Mr. Television that I can detect, don't know why they called it that, but who cares? If this

is only the first single, this could be the start of something big. Certainly turn of the decade ethics is a good direction for young UK bands. To paraphrase Roberto Duran, Mas! Mas! Mas!

FLOWER LEPERDS-HEAVEN'S CLOSED (XXX): (This review originally appeared in Rockpool) When **TONY CADENA** quit **ADOLESCENTS** in '82 he formed **THE ABANDONED**. Then he rejoined Adolescents a few years ago. Then he quit again. Now known as **TONY MONTANA**, he fronts Flower Leperds these days, another 5 piece punk group much in the way of the above mentioned. In these days of the hardcore/metal/thrash covenant, older styled records like this continue to stand out from the mire. In fact, Montana's strained (if spirited) vocals are the least the Leperds have to offer, as the '81 so-cal punk-pop sound popularized by CH3, Social Distortion, TSOL, Bad Religion and yes, Adolescents (you get that old Rikk/Frank Agnew guitar soar a lot here, great!) is updated with the odd acoustic guitar and best of all, an attack that's almost toned down and mild despite the overall 'rockin' power-guitar feel. Strange to say it; with a slightly better singer (and less trite sleeve art), this would have been one of the best punk LPs of the last few years, it's not far off. 17 not so short songs too, with no quick throwaways! Value. (6715 Hollywood Blvd., Box 284, Hollywood, CA 90028)

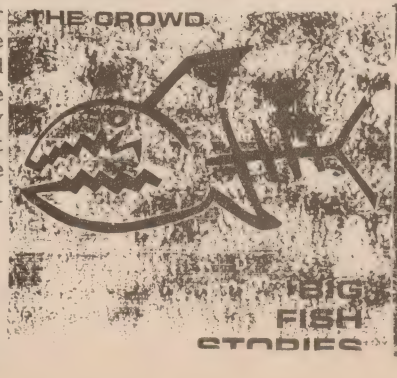
FUZZBOX-"Self" (Geffen): Basically, Fuzzbox has stunk up the joint at least since they shortened their name from **WE'VE GOT A FUZZBOX AND WE'RE GONNA USE IT**, and this airy disco boogie-down is so pitiful it goes straight into the sell pile without the slightest nagging doubt. Good riddance! About as exciting as a Cost Accounting class. So why review it? Because the flipside of the 12" is a version of **QUEEN**'s "Bohemian Rhapsody!" This I've got to hear! Why would anyone want to cover this?! No! An capella verion? Someone cover my ears quick! Someone must have drugged the producer, should have checked that coffee before he drank it. Guess they think this is funny, certainly they laugh their way through it. Hey man, what's funny on the tour bus is pretty embarassing made public. The engineer must have been hiding. You don't have to be a Jets fans to want to wear a bag over your head! Forget the sell pile, this is worth smashing into zillions of pieces. Smash! Crash! Crack!

GUITAR GANGSTERS-PROHIBITION (Link UK): (this review originally appeared in Rockpool) '77 Punk by new young bands gets more and more passe with each year passing. No denying it. But that doesn't stop bands in this vein from turning out fun, catchy music. These power trio "gangsters" from England made a good debut on the Underground Rockers Vol. 1 compilation album, and judging from this 1st LP, there was obviously more where that came from. Singer/guitarist **POWERFUL PIERRE** never met a hook he didn't like, and his vocals, uncannily similar to The Crowd's Jim Decker (compare and see!) are uncommonly "nice," as opposed to the cliched screaming, hollering, bawling mess that's become the punk/HC/thrash/metal vocal stereotype. They could stand to rev it up a bit (blase punk?) but it's nice to hear bands these days who owe more to The Drones, Ramones or Vibrators than Suicidal Tendencies & GBH!(PO Box 164,London, SE13 5QN, UK)

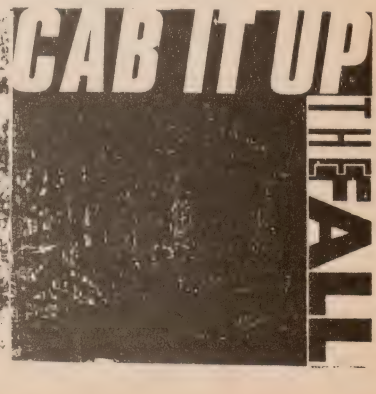
THE HANGMEN-THE HANGMEN (Capitol): Disappointment city. As so often happens when a good young band signs with a major for their first record, Hangmen are blown away by boring commercial production. Live in L.A. they've been raw, bluesy grunge rockers like the Stones/Dolls/Heartbreakers tradition they admire. And the playing here still has that edge, I mean this isn't total drek, it just sounds like it! There's nothing to distinguish this cliched mainstream rock from any of the other wank crap we spend our lives running away from, and that's sad, this band was once a mile away from all that. Even their best songs like "Last Drive" are now so buried in stock sludge, and the typical FM heavy rock sound that they're as safe as pudding. All the danger and attitude they aspire to washed away into the familiar stinking toilet. Flush.

KRAUT-NIGHT OF RAGE (New Red Archives): Posthumous live LP from Kraut, who, along with Bad Brains and Misfits were the best known, biggest selling punk/hardcore bands from the NYC area in the early 80's. Despite their exciting, sometimes classic (see "All Twisted" from An Adjustment To Society, strangely not included here) big guitar greatness, Kraut were not always a steller live group. They had an odd tendency to allow talented guitarist **DOUG HOLLAND** (now in the more metallic **CROMAGS**) to turn up so loud that he blew away bassist **DONNY COWAN**, drummer **JOHNNY FEEDBACK** and singer **DAVE GUNNER** as if they'd forgotten to show up! Anyone who caught one of Holland's almost solo, ear splitting performances at the tiny A7 Club (now King Tuts) will know from whence I speak. When the drums, bass and vocals competed better, as on this LP, they were great. 2/3 of this is from two CBGBs shows, one supporting **THE UK SUBS** in December '82, the other as the band was disintegrating after Holland departed in April '86. The other 1/3 is from L.A.'s wonderful Club Lingerie in Dec. '85, featuring the guest appearance of famed **SEX PISTOLS/PROFESSIONALS** guitarist **STEVE JONES** to beef up their renditions of "Sell Out," "Onward" and The Pistols' "Bodies." Although it seems as if these recordings were originally mixing board tapes, the quality has been preserved so well for vinyl by longtime Kraut producer **RYK OAKLEY** that it's as if you had the original tapes! "Unemployed," "Bogus" and "Arming The World" from Adjustment and "Juvenile Justice" from the excellent (but poorly appreciated) 2nd LP Whetting The Scythe are suitably red hot, and the previously unreleased "new" song "No No No" (not a Gen-X cover) shows that their best material was actually on the way when Holland split, a singalong anthem that's up there with "All Twisted." Holland's replacement for that last CBGB show, the late **CHRIS SMITH** (ex-**BATALLION OF SAINTS**) did a credible job, but no one could fill Holland's shoes as the driving force in Kraut's sound. Though Smith's accidental death was a tragic and sad way for the band to quit, perhaps it worked out for the best. Who knows, but this LP is a fine epitaph.

THE CROWD-BIG FISH STORIES COMEBACK LP



THE FALL-"DEAD BEAT DESCENDANT" 45



THE LURKERS-KING OF THE MOUNTAIN (Link UK): I remember The Lurkers making a comeback 7 years ago with a couple of good platters, "This Dirty Town" and "Frankenstein Again," but it's 1989 and their making a 2nd comeback? Hmmmm. Back in '77 they were thought of as Ramones clones, and funny enough, it seems more true on this LP than it ever was back on Fulham Fallout and God's Lonely Men. For one thing, they've got a drummer who can actually keep a beat (**DAN TOZER**), I mean, you didn't have to see Lurkers' laughable, terrible sets at Max's here in New York a decade ago to know that **ESSO** had no business being let anywhere near a drum set, and that was the era where proficiency at one's instrument was not a prerequisite for greatness! And **ARTURO BASSICK** is a better singer than **HOWARD WALL** was (originals **PETE STRIDE** guitar and **NIGEL MOORE** bass remain from the old days), but what's the point of this? A better version of a derivative inept band is nothing to brag to Grandma about. I mean this is OK, it has a beat and you can dance to it, and sing to it. But they offer you no more, and the standard has to be a little higher from oldtimers. For staunch Ramones fans only? (PO Box 164, London, SE13 5QN UK)

BOB MOULD-WORKBOOK, "See a Little Light" (Virgin): First solo album from Mr. Mould is a resounding success. Not only does he build on his work with **HUSKER DU**, so that his oldest fans will be pleased, but this new mature Mould ought to make himself a slew of new ones too. With the exception of spurts in the middle of songs like "Wishing Well," and the whole of the climactic closer "Whichever Way The Wind Blows," his old slash and burn guitar sound is under wraps. The new Bob is a more controlled substance (just as the Husker Du attack was becoming more wonderfully polished with each album), relying heavily on the songs themselves and the singer to get the passion across. Whereas live at Maxwells the rhythm section of **TONY MAIMONE (PERE UBU)** and **ANTON FIER (GOLDEN PALOMINOS)** seemed almost smug and complacent situated behind their leader's unbridled, furious tenacity and insistence, in the studio the match is more solid (late note: at the Ritz in November the duo seemed much more complimentary - see live review). Fier's piston like machine precision power drumming and Maimone's smooth flowing is so flawless and sympathetic, it sets up Mould well to star on his own record. The man could always play guitar, but stripped of the ferocious hiss of his old flying V, his fingers must do more of the talking and he's way up to the task. Mould also shows inspired skills as an arranger, effortlessly working in **JANE SCARPANTONI**'s sighing cello, and filling each song with a trusty building dynamic. It may be misleading to single out songs, as each one seems as special as the next, but the single, and "Poison Years" are today's favorites, it's a good show start to end. And it's no surprise perhaps to get such a strong performance and vision from an artist who's been bringing it to us for so long, yet still somehow this surpasses expectations. Workbook is no mere collection of latest songs from a well known tireless pen; this is a piece of work. The title is well chosen. (Note, the non-LP flipside "All Those People Know" is the only song that sounds like it would fit easily on the later Husker LPs. Hot chorus too after a merely good one chord verse. Pick this up too if you like the album, that chorus is a killer.)

MY DAD IS DEAD-THE TALLER YOU ARE, THE SHORTER YOU GET (Homestead): The bigger they are, the harder they fall? Oh, sorry... This one man force **MARK EDWARDS** keeps chuggling along as dependable as the 5:15 out of his home Cleveland. This time a double LP! Quite a job for one guy (with help from **JEFF CURTIS** who plays bass on 6 of the 16 cuts). Wonder why he doesn't record with the band he takes on tour, guess he prefers to go it alone (if you want something done, do it yourself?). Like most doubles, it seems to go on forever, and after a while you just play a side at a time, but that's OK, most of this stuff is pretty good to excellent, with one tremendous track. The opening "For Lack of a Better Word," a great title for an instumental, has you thinking for 4 minutes that this is going to be one of the greatest LPs of all time. Unusually pretty, almost soaring, misty sounds hit from both speakers, a cascading array of spendor that's the last thing you'd expect from Edwards! Here's a humble request for more of same! In fact, perhaps he should do more instrumentals, his voice is the only thing that's really just average on his records. The rest does more closely follow his back catalog, but it still sounds as rhythmically and musically interesting as anything coming out of the U.S., somewhere between early Gang of Four and Firehose on the harder stuff like "Crashing Planes." Well done sleeve of car blowing up in the middle of a suburban intersection, too.

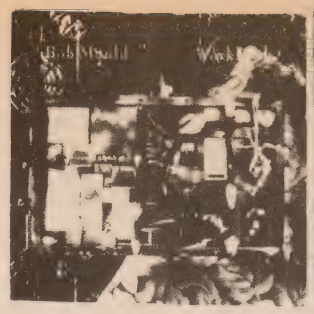
NEW MODEL ARMY-"I Love The World" (Capitol/EMI): 5 Song 12" with no sleeve that may be promotional only (but you see it in record stores anyway). "I Love the World" is the opening track on the current 4th LP Thunder and Consolation, along with "Stupid Questions" (another 45) the best thing on it. Hammering isn't it? But that's not what is going to get you to buy a sleeveless 12" is it? Four live tracks make it a hell of a lot more attractive! The crowd sings the whole first verse of "51st State" instead of **JUSIN SULLIVAN** (aka **SLADE THE LEVELER**), yes NMA have a big, loyal following in their native England. "White Coats" is as disquieting as the single, "My Country" (from No Rest For The Wicked) booms (big bass) and best of all, there's a version of "Betcha," the b-side of their rare 1st single "Bittersweet" that's twice as fast, battering and out of breath. NMA were always a fearsome live act, with big **ROB** smashing away at his drums and **MOOSE** and Justin's additional frenzy. You can sure hear it on this track! Find this if you can, don't know how available it is.

THE NIHILISTICS-BAD..DIRTY..HATE (Visionary): Bad Dirty Hate, the opposite of good clean fun, that sure describes Long Island's Nihilistics, Moliere's favorite band (he wrote The Misanthrope after all). It's amusing that Nihilstics have reunited. They even had the orignal lineup back, but guitar man **BIG CHRIS T.** decided the commute from New Jersey was a pain, and drummer **SKINNY TROY** broke his pelvis in a motorcycle accident. They're replaced by **AJAX** guitar and **DAVE** drums. Both look suitably ugly for the band that so despises beauty! **RON** & **MIKE**, vocals and bass, remain from the old days. Back in '81, they, Heart Attack, Undead, Kraut, Bad Brains, Reagan Youth, etc. were the NYC hardcore scene, all different, all vital, all young, loud, and fashionless in a trendy town dominated by art/funk clones and teenybop popsters brought to you by N.Y. Rocker. Nihilistics were not a classic punk band, they were some kind of holy terror, a almost mad, near tuneless racket of rage, dislike and disgust. They wrote "songs" that had all the subtlety of being hit by a baseball bat in the face, and because their incredible hatred and revulsion for the human race was so radically, directly stated,

they were the funniest band around! Playing their LP, their cuts on ROIR Cassette comp. that documents that time New York Thrash (Tim Sommer, who put it together, described Nihilistics in his liner notes as "1/3 Crass, 1/3 Fall, 1/3 Discharge") and especially their incredible 5 song EP, you couldn't help but crack up on their uncompromising starkness, a cynic smorgasbord. They only found death appealing. Society is worthless. Here's the best anti-reincarnation song ever composed: "After death, after death, do you know what's after death? After death you rot in the mud!" Hysterical! At their shows, their hatred for their audience was expressed by bassist Mike upchucking on anyone sitting on the edge of the stage watching the slammers instead of the band. Nowadays, it's strange to find the new Nihilistics can actually play a song competently and make it sound like '77-'82 UK Oi/punk, somewhere between Menace, early Blitz and The Business. I vastly preferred the unpredictable cacaphony of the old style as the perfect backdrop for their confrontational venom, but if you like old hardcore, they're good at it. Besides, the lyrical invective is as pronounced as before, make no mistake Ron still hates you, hates me, hates himself! Stuff like "That's the way it's got to be/I'm only living just for me." What other band/singer would give it to you that straight? My favorite social comedians are back. (524 W. 23 St., Suite 4049, NYC 10011)

NOFX-S&M AIRLINES (Epitaph): The sleeve is embarassing. A drawing of an S&M clad woman with a whip riding on a plane is not the way to open minds before playing a record. Let's disregard whether it is or isn't offensive, that's a personal, individual judgment. Your right to decide whether it is or isn't is protected by the 1st Ammendment, as NOFX correctly notes in "Vanilla Sex." But it doesn't have to be offensive or insensitive to women or human beings (it probably is) to be STUPID! If this is all the band has to say, who needs them? Musically they're a pretty hot, way above average thrash band, although unlike the greats of the genre, Bad Brains, Minor Threat and label mates Bad Religion, they lack the classic songwriting that's a must for playing so fast. They also lack an exceptional singer to make melodies out of the furious tempos (like H.R., Ian MacKaye and Greg Graffin in the above three bands), so this is only for those who demand their music to be fast, tight, loud, and musically adept, as this is. But "Mean People Suck" is hardly the work of intellectual social scientists, and well, stupid may rule, but not in this house, and hopefully not in yours either. Get some brains and come back and see us, scarecrow. (6201 Sunset Blvd., Suite 111, Hollywood, CA 90028)

THE PASTELS-SITTIN' PRETTY (Homestead): Though Homestead's signings the last few years have been decidedly shabby, they continue their better foreign licensings. Scotland's Pastels, one of the orignal Creation bands 'round '84 have actually been making records since 1981, and though few have really been substantial turnons, most have been of some quality. Were **STEPHEN MCROBBIE** as good a singer as he is a pop songwriter/guitarist perhaps they'd be both as popular and as swingin' as the multitude of younger bands who've claimed them for an influence, but that whiny twang of his has mildly sabatoged some otherwise lovely recordings. He's not bad enough as to make them unlistenable, just enough of a liability to detract. As a result, they'll probably never break out of the anorak tag or movement, and they'll never lead it either. They're merely a solid, enjoyable, interesting pop group



BOB MOULD-WORKBOOK (FIRST SOLO LP)

CARL PERKINS-BORN TO ROCK (STILL DOES TOO!)

when we're looking for something more spectacular. Ah well. (POBox 800, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-0800)

CARL PERKINS-BORN TO ROCK (Universal/MCA): OK if not spectacular work by the 50's rock 'n' roll legend. Again, that's saying a lot for a guy who's now been making records for 34 years! Actually, it opens great, with the LPs two most kickin' songs. "Born to Rock" is the down home rockabilly Perkins, Presley, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent and others founded, while "Charlene" is a honky-tonk tale of bewildered and bemused "that girl came and went" set to appropriate good time shuffle beat. But from there things turn a little somber. Though the mix of blues, ballads, bluegrass, country and r'n' b is always appealing, and sometimes effective ("Hambone," "Baby, Please Answer Your Phone,") they're not quite up there with either his older stuff (the mid-50's Sun years in particular) nor his hells-a-fire live show around these parts the last few years. Indeed, why aren't his two sons **GREG** and **STAN PERKINS** on this record? This bass and drums duo is what largely gives the current live Perkins his spark, and they've been in the band for years, where are they? But the man can still write (4 of the songs are co-written by his sons), and his voice is as Tennessee fine as ever. Put "Born to Rock" on a tape sometime, Uncle Rabid says you won't regret it. **NOTE:** Lyrics to "Born to Rock" are great too, especially this: "Thank you folks for one more shot/This Rockabilly Cat was born to rock." No doubt this is a reference to how he was rescued from a failed career and the resulting bad alcoholism by the reawakening of interest in him after **THE BEATLES** recorded 5 of his songs, a few even with Perkins present in the studio at Abbey Road, "Sure to Fall," "Lend Me Your Comb," "Honey Don't" "Everybody's Trying to be My Baby," and the immortal "Matchbox." Here's one modest old soul who richly deserves his place in memories of rock 'n' roll and rockabilly fans!

THE PRIMITIVES-"Sick of It" (RCA): Aptly titled pre-LP single, as a lot of us have grown pretty sick of the Primitives! Little has borne out the promise of early singles like "Crash." Though their releases since have been alright, and enjoyable enough, we keep wondering when they'll make another record we'll want to play more than a couple of times before filing it. They need better material, the sound is there. This is OK, but that "Sick of it/Sick of it all" chorus is damn boring after a while, even before you start getting bombarded with it on the WDRE's of the world. Nice to see **TRACY TRACY** has stopped dying her hair, maybe some of the Blondie comparisons will cease; for songwriting sake, the early Blondie was a much better band! Hopefully there are better tracks of the new Purity than this! Even better title: how to waste a perfectly good verse in 8 easy lessons!

THE PRUDES-"Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter" (Yo Yo UK): Debut single from terrific London quartet unfortunately does not compare well with their two strong London live shows in May. B side which ended both of their sets, "P.S. I'm Leaving" is notable for it's fuzzed out, jarring attack, but the song itself is not compelling. A side is much better, on the par with the shows, but is blunted by the subway-tunnel-like submerged production, particularly the vocals (a notable live strength). It sounds like there's a few pillows between singer (someday star) **BRADLEIGH SMITH** and the mic. Still it's an OK start. Music is post-punk fresh with bass as lead in mix, like Joy Division say, though the band sounds little like them. New single (new recording of this b-side, apparently) is already out on 12" on Imaginary label. Report next issue. (32 Georgia Rd., Thornton Heath, Surrey, CR4 8DQ)

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.-9 (Virgin/Atlantic/WEA): A better title would have been Boring, once **JOHNNY ROTTEN**'s favorite word. The tired single "Disappointed" (which surprisingly gets better with each listen, though those putrid female backing vocals still have to go) is actually the most intriguing selection. PIL is now a bunch of talented, competent, but unchallenging musicians, with no spark and no soul, playing wimp white funk, bland soul and faceless U2 wank that even the current U2 would discard. Not even Rotten himself and his usual invigorating vocal venom can save garbage from smelling, it's still time to take out the trash. If you can play this LP start to finish without your mind wandering, without the impulse to take it off and put on one of PIL's genuinely inspired older records, without drifting off to slumber, I tip my nightcap. Once the trailblazing innovators others grudgingly followed, now there is nothing to follow but air, smoke and mirrors, unlistenable commercial fodder, save for a remarkable singer/lyricist. Not even worth used bin prices. I keep thinking Johnny'll come to his senses and get back on track. I keep having illusions.

RAPEMAN-"Inki's Butt Crack" (Sub Pop): Two short instrumentals from the vaults make up this 7". A-side is that clanging steel on concrete guitar sound of **STEVE ALBINI** meeting the nasty rhtyhm section of this now desceased band. Violins at end are particularly amusing. Never thought I'd see the day! "Song Number One" on the flip is more of the same, only even more ornery, more cranky, more violent, more thrashing about like a bad nightmare at 3:47 A.M. that you can't wake up out of. Too bad they split up, musically they were lethal. Good of Sub Pop to join the **BOB MOULD/STEVE FALLON/NICK HILL** run S.O.L. (Singles Only Label) in doing their part to keep the 7" single, our favorite vinyl, on the market. This is #1 of Sub Pop's montly series. Look for new Fugazi one.

R.E.M.-"Stand" (WEA UK): Had to pick up new UK release of "Stand" to get acoustic version of "Pop Song '89," recorded live and mixed within 4 minutes in Orlando, Florida on April 30, 1989. Stipe changes the melody on the chorus, which, added to the stripped down lone acoustic backing, makes a whole different experience out of this Green opening track. Gotta like it. R.E.M. has a habit of releasing live acoustic versions of their songs; it's a tendency worth aplauding, and worth your $$$.

RIFLE SPORT-LIVE AT THE ENTRY, DEAD AT THE EXIT (Ruthless): Minneapolis' Rifle Sport has been largely ignored in this country despite existing 7 or 8 years, while their local contemporaries have made large reputations. Even **BREAKING CIRCUS**, who until their recent split, were regularly borrowing Rifle Sport's rhythm section, were far better known. But that hasn't deterred R.S. Recorded at Mpls.' friendly 7th St. Entry club (a terrific, small, dark place connected by a passageway to to the daunting, airplane hanger sized First Ave. Club, where Prince and Replacements play), the amusingly titled Live at the Entry/Dead at The Exit is brought to us whole by the engineering of **IAN BURGESS** (Naked Raygun, Big Black, Effigies, Mega City 4, etc.) and **EFFIGIE/BLOODSPORT** guitarist **CHRIS BJORKLAND.** Burgess is even rewarded with his photo inserted inside. The record doesn't depart from their previous work: Post-punk jagged rhythms from hot bass/drum team of **TODD TRAINER** and **FLOUR** (who recently supported his two solo LPs on Touch and Go by doing a string of northeast dates with an incognito **STEVE ALBINI** in his band) are still the best thing about R.S., which well complements the almost Andy Gill (Gang of Four) or Geordie (Killing Joke) guitar of **GERARD-JEAN BOISSY. J. CHRISTOPHER,** the consummate music lover, still gets by more on spirit and attitude than vocal attributes. As hyperventilating as a slinkee heading down the steps of Machu Pichu (don't ask me how to spell that), this band is like 5 cups of coffee after a sleepless night (turn up the heat, landlord!). (PO Box 2483, Loop Sta., Mpls.,MN 55402)

RULE OF THUMB-THE FIRST MISTAKE (Alternative): Not bad 7 song guitar pop EP from promising local quartet. What impresses is their willingness to change styles, not only song to song, but within the songs themselves. The songs are also above average save for the typical lyrical cliches. This disc doesn't really knock me over and demand my undivided attention (which is the goal of record purchasing), but there's enough on such upbeat pop-tunes as "Don't" and "Suppression" to make a guy or girl hum, and these days it seems there's precious little of that. Pretty good for Staten Island! (140 Prospect St., Staten Island, New York)

THE SAINTS-"Stay" (Mushroom AUS): 3rd Aussie single off Prodigal Son, a pretty good choice. At $5, you'll need a non-LP track to make it worthwhile, and though you get one, "Idiot Blues" is not the highlight of their great 16 year career! This hokey country and western/folk/tex mex soup bronco buster is so unusual, The Saints hide under the pseudonym **"ART AND HIS BROTHER LUIGI"** and it says it's "produced by a monkey in a tin cup" (!!!) just to remind you that this is just a bit of fun, and not to be taken too seriously. For this I like it a lot and don't want my money back, it's the kind of silly romp worth taking now and then , Los Lobos' like accordian and all! As for you, well you may have better priorities for your hard earned smackers. Nice sleeve photo of freezing cold **CHRIS BAILEY** framed over bleak canyon, fits a-side lyrics!

SEBADOH-THE FREED MAN (Homestead): Sebadoh is **DINOSAUR JR.** bassist **LOU BARLOW** and radio DJ **ERIC GAFFNEY.** These are home tapes, originally released on cassette. While the collaboration sounds intriguing, in reality it's just the two wasting time, fooling around, about as absorbing and interesting as a minor aquaintance's home movies of their kids' toilet training. So boring and indulgent it's not worth the vinyl it's pressed on. Avoid like Heat vs. Timberwolves games, especially you Dinosaur Jr. fans! Barlow has since been fired from that band. Too bad this isn't why! (PO Box 800, Rockville Centre, NY 11571-0800)

76% UNCERTAIN-Hunka Hunka Burnin' Log (Wishing Well): 3rd LP from well known local (Bridgeport, CT) hardcore band. Yes, it's typical metallic speedrush HC, much like their previous stuff. But even if you're still waiting for them to break out of this stuff (like AOD, say), or write more classic punk tunes like "I Hate The Radio" (which they appropriated from the incredible early 80's HC band which 1/2 of 76% came from, **C.I.A.**), this is still better than average thrash, mostly 'cause of singer **BONES**. In both C.I.A. and 76%, Bones has long stood out as one of the best hardcore singers, an intense, yet not-so raw voice that turns buzzing noise into music. Cover of **Paul McCarntney**'s "Live and Let Die" is both the best and funniest thing here; these guys always had a sense of humor. (PO Box 9417 Fountain Valley, CA 92728)

SHAM 69-SHAM'S LAST STAND (Link UK): Do we really need 3 live Sham LPs, all recorded within a year of each other a decade ago? Well, sort of. Live and Loud from 2 years ago is still the best and most intense. Live and Loud Volume 2 from early last year was also good if redundant. What this one has going for it is the emotion of a farewell gig. Right from the opening tape of "2001 Theme" through to the ending "Borstal Breakout" this is instant nostalgia, and though Sham didn't go out in a tearful, weepy toodle-loo (they seem defiant to the end), there's still that heavy feeling of last-chance-gas permeating this recording. The crowd was unruly, and though you can't hear it here, this final show at London's Rainbow Theater ended in riot, perhaps the only way such a band that played to the mobs could. But there's no denying the spirit of the pure, hard, unsweetened punk rock coming blasting out one more time and this is both a piece of history and a great bang instead of a wimper. Again, this is the last and by far the most talented, best rehearsed lineup Sham had, with **DAVE TREGANNA** on bass, and even the inferior 1st LP material and debut single comes alive here with decent musicians! We will always wish people would remember Sham by The Game and Hersham Boys (and these three late live albums) rather than the naive "If The Kids Are United." Most interesting monologue by motormouth **JIMMY PURSEY** is the intro to "Rip Off," which is dedicated to **MALCOMN MCLAREN**, King's Road (the "punk fashion" shops, now touristy) and even Sham 69 since "even they rip you off." Hey Jim, considering your terrible recent comeback band's live show and their even more awful new records, it seems more so now than then! (PO Box 164, London, SE13 5QN UK)

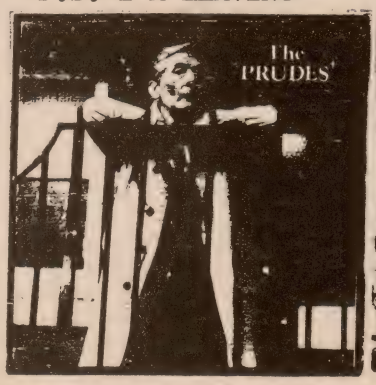
PETE SHELLEY-"Homosapien II" (Immaculate UK): I don't get it. Shelley blasts **STEVE DIGGLE** for dredging up the past by changing the name of **F.O.C.** to **BUZZCOCKS/F.O.C.**, a position likely to find much agreement, and then he goes out and redoes his first solo single from 8 years ago! Not only that, but he takes a pretty good disco-pop song (even if he was merely ripping himself off, stealing the riff to "Something's Gone Wrong Again"), and he blows it completely, going boogie-down, blip-blip dance beat drivel that even the worst Depeche Mode ripoff band probably would reject. Then he has the poor sense to make an instrumental version of same the b-side! The only thing worth listening to in this piece of &$@*&@%¢ was the vocal track, and even then it's cause we're so partial to Shelley's voice! Yuck, yuck, yuck, yuck, yuck, yuck, yuck, yuck.

SHIVA BURLESQUE-SHIVA BURLESQUE (Nate Starkman & Son): One truly great song, stuck in the middle of side one makes this LP worth its purchase. Hell of a title and subject too: "The Lonesome Death of **SHADOW MORTON.**" The late Morton was the world famous 60's girl group producer, who much later in '74 produced the **NEW YORK DOLLS**' 2nd LP In Too Much Too Soon, much as in '79 the Ramones enlisted **PHIL SPECTOR** to produce them. Morton perished under somewhat mysterious circumstances, and he's worthy of this tribute, particularly since the music on it is so damn good, a guitar sound you might get if you mixed For Against (Harry Dingman, now in The Millions), John McGeough era Banshees and "Sojourns End" Lucy Show. The song rushes against the "lonely" windy feeling with beauty and immediacy. 7 of the other 8 songs are more textural fountains of spray, a hazy psychedelic quality of a band in no particular hurry, whose only desire is to mark the passing of time with lovely sounds and sparse vocals. "Train Mystery"s harsher tones are the only other break in the mystical fabric of Shiva Burlesque, who seek a majesty to match the Fine Art **DEBORAH LAWRENCE** cover without Goth's dirge or moroseness. Though their overall songwriting could stand much improvement, their ability to weave such crystal webs is advanced enough to recommend this consistently fascinating album. (544 Mateo St., LA, CA 90013)

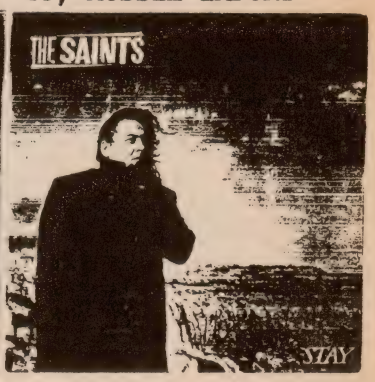
SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS-THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE TAPES (Link UK): Link UK comes through again with archival collection of an old '76-'80 favorite. Slaughter was never liked by the UK press, too coarse on the edges I guess. But they were the first punk group in Manchester (even Buzzcocks 1st gig was supporting Sex Pistols and Slaughter there), and the stars of the Punk Movie made by (current Big Audio Dynamite) movie man Don Letts. This LP comes from the personal collection of guitarist **MICK ROSSI**, and though 1/3 of the album suffers from sound quality that would generously be described as "primitive" (in particular the demos of "I'm Mad" and Live at The Roxy favorite "Boston Babies"). But the live versions of "Cranked Up Really High" and "Where Have All The Bootboys Gone" are raw and nasty, and best of all, the never before heard studio tracks like "Situations" (why oh why did this have to wait 'til '89 to appear?) and their bastardization of **THE ISELY BROTHERS**' "Twist and Shout" (retitled "Twist and Turn") are real finds. This LP could be better titled "The Joy of Punk Rock," 'cause that's how it feels, guitar rockers that stand the test of time and space and place. (PO Box 164, London, SE13 5QN)

SNUFF-"Not Listening 7" EP (Worker's Playtime UK: According to Snuff, hardcore's not dead. They even do something as trite as putting a picture of a stage-diver on the back sleeve, hey really rad man.

THE PRUDES-DEBUT 45 "P.S. I'M LEAVING"



THE SAINTS-NEW "STAY" 45, AUSSIE IMPORT



What is it, 8 years since Boston Not L.A.? And half of this is run of the mill (if tight and competent) thrash that sounds like, well, does Flex Your Head sound recent? But on "Not Listening" and to a lesser extent "That's Enough" when they go for a rock 'n' roll thrash punk sound (you know, somewhere between 1st LP Replacements or Sex Pistols, only much younger sounding), the results are much better. It's surprising enough that's there's a fourth wave (5th? 6th? 29th?) of punk happening in the UK with Mega City 4, Bomb Disneyland, Senseless Things, Price, Red London, Red Letter Day, Guitar Gangsters, Sect, and others. That it's actually listenable and pretty good is a bigger surprise. (67 Collier St., London N1 9BE UK)

JOE STRUMMER-"Gangsterville" (Epic/CBS UK): Although infinitely better than Cut the Crap and "Love Kills," this is still a bit of a mis-step after the smart simplicity of "Trash City." It just isn't as good a song, the hook isn't there. If this is the pre-LP single we'll have to wait and hear Earthquake Weather, Joe's 1st solo LP, before plunking down the irretrievable $7-8. Still, it makes Big Audio Dynamite look even more ridiculous than they have been lately ("James Brown?" Give us a break!), and at least this still has some real energy, and a fun almost Pogues-like (Strummer did some gigs playing in them) latino chorus. "Jewellers and Bums" on the flip is also on the LP, and is 1/2 as good as the A. Ex-**CIRCLE JERKS**' bassist **ZANDER SCHLOSS** remains on guitar. Give this one a B or B- after an A+ on "Trash City." Still, there's always room for Strummer, one of the greats of our generation, and a most entertaining interview! Now, how 'bout reforming **THE CLASH**? Reunion '89!

THE UNDEAD-ACT YOUR RAGE (Post Mortem): We've been waiting for the debut Undead album for 9 years! Was it worth the wait? Should leader **BOBBY STEELE** by given a medal for keeping it going, playing the same music for an entire decade with only a couple of singles and NY Thrash tape cuts to show for it? Perhaps. It is amusing how badly recorded this is. This is the man who, when a member of the **MISFITS**, used to criticize **GLENN DANZIG**'s laughable mis-production of the Misfits' "Night of The Living Dead" 45? Did the two study from the same producing school, and is it run by Grandpa Munster, Moe Howard or Daffy Duck? Were the Teen Idles and Solger fellow classmates? We defy you to play "find the bass guitar" on our two old favorites, "Gimme Your Autograph" (for John Lennon) and "Social Reason!" However, just as the Misfits' singles with Steele were somehow made more charming for their grungy primitive sound, on Act Your Rage, this barebones shoddy production is only a mild nuisance. The real difficulty is the time warp, 'cause it isn't '81 anymore, let's face it! But even that's not that bothersome, and for uptempo happy pop punk with sneering street cred lyrics, The Undead are still a New York punk band, like all New Yorkers gritty survivors with thick skins. Not a punk classic, no. And they're far better live. But Bobby's still singing "RATTFINK" (the old Misfits' b-side he sang in '79) and some things do stay the same the more they change. The Undead still walk among us! (POB 358, New Milford, NJ 07646)

THE VINES-WALK THE FLOOR EP (Aquablue): Another new local band, this one from Hoboken, with a 6 song 12" engineered and mixed by **MITCH EASTER** at his Drive in Studios in Winston-Salem NC. Sure 'nuff, it's not that far off from the REM/Lets Active fluid guitar pop that Easter likes, but there's a dreamy and introspective side to The Vines that's distinctively appealing. The guitar work of **ALIRIO GUERRERO** and **SUZANNE LAVINE** is consistently interesting and invigorating, and Lavine's vocals, while sometimes slightly stiff and wooden, are nevertheless happy and refreshing (yea, another female voice interrupting the parade of strutting males!). "Blue and Grey" is the standout, and "100 Years" (not the Cure opus) is particularly nice. Nice sound, nice songs, nice arrangements, nice work. (165 3rd St. #6, Hoboken NJ 07030)

CADEAU DE MARIAGE (WEDDING PRESENT)-"Pourquoi Es Tu Devenue Si Raisonnable? (Reception UK): Wedding Present release "Why are You Being So Reasonable Now" in French. OK fine. But I don't speak French! I'll stick to the English version, one of their better singles of late, dig that Smiths-like title! Acoustic version of "Give my Love to Kevin" is why non-French types would want this, that is if you admire **DAVE GEDGE**'s singing (he's alright).

EVERYDAY IS A HOLLY DAY: A TRIBUTE TO **BUDDY HOLLY** (New Rose FR/Emergo US/Roadrunner/MCA): OK Holly cover sampler, perhaps the third best thing. First best would be the originals themselves. 2nd best would be the 60's Holly covers put onto one cassette, for instance, **BEATLES**' "Words of Love," **ROLLING STONES**' "Not Fade Away," **HOLLIES**' "Take Your Time," etc., all better than any of the versions on this '89 album. Also, too many of the bands here merely copy the original without adding much individual style. That serves little purpose. This flaw aside, it's still an enjoyable collection, both for the spirit (it was released to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Iowa plane crash tragic deaths of Holly, **BIG BOPPER**, and **RICHIE VALENS**) and for the happy go lucky nature of Holly's tunes themselves. The real standouts are **THE SHOES**' (they still around? Did they reunite or did they hibernate for half a decade?) suitably dreamy "Words of Love," **RED RIVER**'s "Rave On" (Holly's best ever), **PAUL ROLAND**'s "Peggy Sue Got Married," **OFB**'s "Oh Boy" and the standout track, **THE SAINTS**' leader **CHRIS BAILEY**'s solo outing, "It doesn't matter anymore," just the kind of strings laden, crying blues number Bailey excels at. Like this better than the last Saints LP by far! Smart arrangement as always, vastly different than Holly's. And oh yes, what a voice! Other artists: **IMITATION LIFE, LMNOP, CLASSIC RUINS, TED & TALL TOPS, WILLIE ALEXANDER, COUNTRY ROCKERS, LOLITAS, ELLIOTT MURPHY, TAV FALCO's PANTHER BURNS, SPEEDY SPARKS, SLICKEE BOYS, CHRIS SPEDDING.**(225 Lafayette St., Suite 709, NYC NY 10012)

HARD TO BE COOL IN AN UNCOOL WORLD (I Wanna): Notable as the only place you can find a track from Cincinnati's **LIBERTINES**' sensational Tilt-a-Whirl LP (#1 last issue) which is still at this point a Holland only import. The opening (and LP best) track "Too Bad It's Raining" appears here, and that alone is worth any $$$ you spend! Unusual melancholy Libertines, with **WALT HODGE**'s ever stupendous lyrics and strong throaty vocal, + great guitar backbone. Aside from this, the LP is a petty good stab at a representative US sampler, with an emphasis on rootsy pop, like the downhome **HIGHWAYMEN** from Ohio and New York's own countryish **TALL LONESOME PINES.** Connecticut veteran rockers **REDUCERS** and solid Cincinnati punks **THE OBVIOUS** turn up the volume as does Austin, TX's recently deceased **TRUE BELEIVERS**, whose **VELVET UNDERGROUND/IGGY AND THE STOOGES**' live medly of "Foggy Notion" into "Search and Destroy" rocks the house as those songs should! (leader **JAVIER ESCOVEDO**, ex of **THE ZEROS** has moved to New York and formed a new band, **THE LOST**) Also

featured: **HUMAN SWITCHBOARD, RANDY X WITH THE MCGUIRES, TRUCKADELICS FEATURING FRANKIE CAMARO, GO TO BLAZES, SCHRAMMS** and **MECCA NORMAL.** (POBox 166, Wright Bros. Sta. Dayton, OH 45409)

STATE OF THE UNION (Dischord): Any record whose proceeds benefit the **AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION** and a group that works with the homeless is worth buying. The music is great too. 16 bands, all Washington D.C. types with a variety of styles, punk and post-punk primarily, plus punkfunk, pop and folk. However, the real attraction, aside from supporting needy causes, is the booklet that comes with the LP, the most impressive non-Jello Biafra straight-talk booklet of its kind. It's a comprehensive digest of truth and information witheld from we the people by the willful distortions of the organized, corporation controlled media, or worse, ignored by we the immune, uncaring, apathetic people. This book makes you angry. It should. Typical fact presented: **1)**The biggest selling newspaper in the US is The National Enquirer, while the biggest seeling magazine is TV Guide (us writers particularly choke on that one!), **2)**In 1983, handguns killed: 35 people in Japan, 8 in Great Britain, 27 in Switzerland, 6 in Canada, 7 in Sweden, 10 in Australia, and 9,014 in the US! Or for us people who are too busy being rebels without a cause with a record collection, dig this stat: **3)**"Four record companies account for 89% of all top 10 hits, and roughly 30 corporations control 90% of the media!" (Caroline Pari suggests as further reading the article in The Nation on Mega-Media Corporate Controllers). They should sell this booklet as a magazine, may we suggest it as required reading, a source and a starting point for a new awareness? Musically, **MARGINAL MAN, FUGAZI, SOULSIDE,** and **SCREAM** turn in the best tracks, all unreleased elsewhere, as are the contributions of **IGNITION, BROKEN SIREN, CHRIST ON A CRUTCH, KING FACE, RAIN, 3, ONE LAST WISH, THORNS, FIRE PARTY, FIDELITY JONES, RED EMMA** and **SHUDDER TO THINK.** The Fugazi track "In Defense of Humans" is notably hot! Buy the record. Please! Enrich your mind, do something good. (3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington D.C. 20007)

THE UNDEAD-ACT YOUR RAGE, 1ST LP, 8 YRS.

STATE OF THE UNION D.C. BENEFIT COMPILATION

REVIEWS BY TONY (TASTE THE FLOOR MAGAZINE)

Galaxie 500: "On Fire", Rough Trade. Galaxie 500 are the band of the 90's. You read it here first. Buy this record and their first record "Today". They will be classics. Very original songwriting, hollow bass, and simple drums, very reminiscent of late Velvet Underground. Galaxie get this comparison often, but do not be fooled, they are hardly a cover band, they do borrow alot from them though. "Tell Me" has a blasting guitar solo ala Wil Sargent and "Snowstorm" is buried in wah-wah, a light unsettling, more of a waterstorm, I feel drowned. "Strange" would have been the perfect single if not for the plodding drums on it, maybe they were rushed, maybe or that could be one possible weakness with this band although the rest of the record would prove not. "Today" was a great record, "On Fire" is a colossal record, Galaxie has taken more time and care in recording and mixing (along with the help of underground legend Kramer) shown their true talents. The vibrant, overdubbed guitar solos ringing out and breaking free, Dean Wareham is a demented, troubled Neil Young on "Decomposing Trees" with its dark sax and distant tamborine wrenching at your gut. "Another Day" is bassist Naomi Yang's 'femme fatale' although more like Liz Frazier than Nico and that back tracked solo woah...brilliant. What a treat!

Blake Babies: "Slow Learner" EP, Utility. This is a great record and a great band. Moody, eclectic and introverted but hardly out of touch, the Blake Babies strum and burn on this, bright guitars and sothing vocals layer and lather. A little country and punk influences here, but a very original sound. Evan Dando, of the Lemonheads, guests on bass. "Lament" start off similar to Dinosaur, Jr's "Freak Scene" and they reworked "Better Than You" (originally from 1987's "Nicely, Nicely") into to "Rain", with choppy changes and whistling, swirling guitars. My favorite is this silly little pop tune called "From Here To Burma", it is cute and cuddly and just enough to last me til the full length LP is released on Mammoth Records sometime soon. Buy it.

Vow Of Silence: 4 Song 12" EP, Wharehouse. Pretensious funky, synth pop in the vein of Figures On A Beach, only a little more interesting, less produced and more ambitious. Remember November Group? This is kind of a male version. The lyrics are vague and impersonal. I like drum machines but this is too synthy. "Martyr" is a good song, especially the female back up vocals and the nice clean guitar and its distorted solo later. "A Light In The Garden" is the moody ballad thing which works, but after 4 songs, this vocalist is getting on my nerves, too bad cause the music is not horrendous.

Hollow Heyday: "Abandoned", Tantrum. This is a pseudo noise, post punk, thrashy free for all. It's thinly produced and should've have recorded at $50+ an hour Synchro Sound and done it cheaper and louder at a 16 track live thing. I like "Come Again, Go Again" and "Stop It" they came OK, but the snipets of partial songs placed between each song is annoying. I hear they are good live, we'll have to see. This could've been done better.

Dresden Danse: "Acid", Harvard Square. Don't waste your time. I hate this. Produced by Greg Hawkes, keyboardist for the Cars. Big deal. Actually the production isn't bad, just the material is. Theres a bad acid house tune ("Sacrafice"), there's the dark, urban monotonous noise song ("Dresden Danse") and there is the funky, Kid Creole thing ("20th Century Pervert"). Slick and boring, lacking deep meaningfulness It has no feeling. Dresden Danse remind me of those bands you hate because they arrive late to the genre and are the epitome of everything you hate.

The March: "Where Are Angels", 6 song tape. Easily New England's darkest band, this Providence outfit has got it all, Howling electric guitars blended with acoustic, throbbing bass, crashing drums and a gut wrenching vocalist. A mix of fast and slow tempos abound throughout. Decent production. "The Blood Vow" harrows and blasts its incarnation, this band, similar to other dark tribalists from across the shores, conjure up the perfect mood music for all depressants Rumour has it they've split. What a drag, the guitars penetrate thoroughly and it was just starting to get interesting.

Eve Goodman: "Skipping Stones" tape. The next Tracy Chapman? Well, you could say that about Eve Goodman, she probably hates the comparison, her songs however are enlightening, poetic and folkie but not too hippy or politically overbearing. She has a beautiful voice and plays 12 string guitar very well. Eve's soul searches on "Skipping Stones" though those topics a-lot of people song about; the oppisite sex, relations but hardly in a common fashion. Her songs are eclectic and enticing and the addition of sax on "Walk On Water" and "Snowbound" just fills out her sllready brilliant sound.

CURRENT FAVE SPINS:
Psychedelic Furs-"Book Of Days"
Gary Numan-"Ghost"
The Stone Roses-"The Stone Roses"
The Cure-"Disintergration"
Love And Rockets-Love And Rockets"

TIM BROWN'S RAINY DAY REVIEWS

WONDERSTUFF-HUP(Polydor)/"Golden Green"(import)- The Wonderstuff's second long-player within a year is really great considering how many bands seem to have trouble with 1.p. number two or take two or three years just to tour and record (U2 or Tears For Fears). The first 1.p.,EIGHT-LEGGED GROOVE MACHINE, was basically a collection of the groups earlier singles, which makes HUP their first 1.p., proper, in that it's all new material. The guitar-buzz driven sound of the 'Stuff is still pretty much the same, including sampled voices at the beginnings and bridges of songs. Some of the tracks have a fresher feel because of added acoustic guitars, organ, and violin. Lyrically, these guys never seem to run short of witty and sarcastic rhymes. The 12" of 1.p. track "Golden Green" is interesting in that they back it with the old hippy anthem, "Get Together" and John Lennon's politically correct punk song "Gimme Some Truth". The latter was performed as an encore on the bands first U.S. tour last spring. Maybe these guys are looking for some "classic rock" radio airplay? I wish they'd get it.

JOE STRUMMER-EARTHQUAKE WEATHER(Epic)- Mr. Strummer makes an excellent return to the world of rock 'n roll with an album of 14 songs.Fans of LONDON CALLING/SANDINISTA era Clash Should be pleased with most of this if they give it a chance. It took a couple of listens, but I've really grown to dig this 1.p. Like later Clash 1.p.'s, this one runs the gamut from straight ahead rockers to funk to reggae with sitar on it for psychedelic effect. Lyrically, old Joe doesn't seem to be as direct and angry as before. He now seems to be more poetic, bringing up images of the beatnicks,be-bop era jazz, and outlaw beach bum island hopping. As usual, to understand anything, you must read along on the lyric sheet. Old Marblemouth carries on with this winning Be-Bop Message!

ONLY ONES-LIVE IN LONDON(Skyclad)- A must buy! Sound quality is excellent and all the fave raves are here. Newer fans of these guys should really blow their hard earned money on this since the old studio 1.p.'s are much tougher to come by. The only thing wrong with this album is there isn't any info on recording date or the location. It's too bad the Only Ones Weren't one of the many bands to reunite this year, I know Peter Perrett could use the dough. One of the most unappreciated bands in rock history.

THE FLUID-ROADMOUTH(Sub Pop)- I'm so sick and tired of hearing about Mudhoney and Soundgarden.Talk about Overrated! YAWN!!! Those guys wish they had ½ the rythmic balls of the Fluid.This group truly deserves the MC5/Stooge "Kick Out the Jams" award of the year! Non-indulgent, loud guitars, and soulful, melodic vocals with good lyrics that actually communicate something make these guys real winners! It's rock 'n roll that picks you up and moves you instead of making you feel that you missed out on some "cool" joke, like their labelmates. The Fluid don't Leave me cold.

WEDDING PRESENT-BIZARRO(RCA import)- The formula seems to be wearing slightly thin for these guys. David Gedge is still capable of the touching melody and poignant lyric, but musically they are still in the same exact place as two years ago on the excellent debut "GEORGE BEST" 1.p. Already converted fans will find this album quite satisfying, but I hope the Weddoes try to branch out a little so they don't grow stale.

PRIMAL SCREAM-PRIMAL SCREAM (Creation import)- After losing their original guitarist, who gave them a Byrds sound with his 12-string Rickenbacher, Primal Scream have gone in a heavier direction too. The quieter numbers now sound a little Stonesy with a little slide guitar and piano thrown in, while most of the 1.p. rocks out in a style VERY reminiscent of the Beach Boys meeting J. Thunders' Heartbreakers in a street fight. Guess who wins? The Stone Roses are rumoured to have been big fans of these guys before they made it. Both bands sound similiar to me, and fans of the more popular Roses should give Primal Scream a Listen.

SOUP DRAGONS-"Backwards Dog" & "Crotch Deep Trash" 12"'s- The Soup Dragons finally put out some new stuff and they go in yet another direction. Now, they've turned the guitars up to eleven, and they really crank it out."Backwards Dog" is the better of the two, having a very danceable, sixties, guitar a go-go feel to it. It sounds like they've stopped trying so hard to become pop stars and have decided to work within their own means. Which means very catchy, danceable rock 'n roll. Simple, the way it should be. (label: Raw TV/Big Life import)

JEFF KELSON'S indie 45 roundup

- JAMES - "Sit Down" (Rough Trade)
"Fresh" from being kicked off a major label, James have now released their best single since their Factory days. Anyone who owns their 2 Sire LPs will be totally amazed at just how magnificent this single is. With folkish sentiments ("those who find themselves ridiculous, sit down next to me") and a terrific vocal performance by Tim Booth, this 45 quickly draws you in and doesn't let you go. I'm now being forced to remove this from my turntable to review other records. The thought is not appealing. (9½)

- SENSELESS THINGS - "Too Much Kissing" (Way Cool) -(ST's correspondence, Flat 9, Lebanon Court, Richmond RD., Twickenham, TW1 3DA, Eng)
These Mega City 4 hopefuls have surpassed the Megas at their own game. They've come out from the shadows with a song whose restraint gives it its energy. Infinitely more inter-

esting than anything else they've done. Dramatic, cohesive, catchy, mysterious...(8½)

- PHIL WILSON - "Better Days" (Caff)
After receiving the boot from Creation, Phil Wilson (ex-June Brides) has sadly given up music. Thus this stands as a final wave goodbye and as such, isn't bad. It isn't good, either. Pretty much a harmless tune boistered by Phil's jangly guitars. I'll miss him. (6)

- THE LIGHTNING SEEDS - "Pure" (Ghetto)
Fronted by ex-Echo producer, Ian Broudie, this charmer sounds like The The stripped of the funk and political sentiment. This should be in the top 40 of every western civilized nation. A few more of these and I'll be in pop nirvana. (8)

- PALE SAINTS - "Barging Into the Presence of God" ep (4AD)
4AD's latest discoveries continue the trend toward signing bands that don't sound like the Cocteau Twins. The Pale Saints are a story of a small indie band that got swooped up by a major indie label (arty sleeves and all) and have metamorphosized into a strong, riveting quartet (sorry about the live review guys, but live, you stink). With more than a nod to the Jesus & Mary Chain and Velvet Underground, these boys have created a splendid record. By this time next year, I bet they'll be the talk of the town. (7½)

- THE FAMILY CAT - "Tom Verlaine" (Bad Girl)
This is the band to name-drop around the UK. Actually, I got quite interested by the title - enough to expect some sort of Television influence. Forget it, this stuff is just noisy, Mighty Lemon Drops guitars masking a song lacking in the creativity department. For God's sake, the "hunt for the next big thing" UK press should give bands time to develop before proclaiming them the sound of the 90's. B-side "Gabriel's Wings" makes it worth listening to. And now I hear they have an LP out. Talk about walking before being able to crawl. At this pace, their 3rd LP will be out before most bands' debut singles. (5½)

- THE SERVANTS - "It's My Turn" (Glass)
The Servants are back, and with David Westlake at the helm. Their 3-year hiatus has done nothing to change their sound as this ditty harks back to the sublime beauty of "The Sun, A Small Star." Layered guitars, rich vocals and a haunting baseline help to create a strong comeback for these wandering lads. (8)

- THE SANDKINGS - "All's Well With the World" (Long Beach)
They want to be the Wonder Stuff so much they can taste, smell, touch, swallow and kiss it. The only thing that saves a plagiarism suit is Steven Street's production and the fact that the Wonder Stuff are their buddies. They're catching on in England, but frankly, I think they're crap. A shame. Their first singles were so good, too. (1)

- EMILY - "Stumble" (Esurient Communications)
Oh, no, another ex-Creation act. A good vocal performance (deep and brooding) keeps this mundane song from being disregarded. However, the vocals mixed up too high and the music too low fail to provide any cohesion for this song. (6)

- FALLOVER TWENTY FOUR - "Pessimistic Man" ep (Ugly Man, 174 Great Clowes St. , Salford 7, England)
Anyone fortunate enough to remember early 80's Manchester band the Distractions will flip over this baby. Melancholia spliced with urgent vocals and the Manchester (yeah, they're from there, too) sound will attract those of you who love that post-punk pop. Personally, I could listen to this brand of heart wrenching forever. Yup, it rates a big (9).

- THE HOUSE OF LOVE - "I Don't Know Why I Love You" (Fontana)
Forget about their last 45 ("Never"), this one is for real. It combines the baroque feel of "Christine" with the intensity of "Destroy the Heart" to create a wonderful and exhilarating experience. The major label backing hasn't short-circuited their raw power. All you naysayers who have given up on this band - now is your time to repent. A killer. (9)

- KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION - "Elephantine" ep (One Little Indian)
You hear multi-layered guitars, an attractive tune and socio-political lyrics - it can only be the new Kitchens' 45. A definite step down from "3rd Time We Opened the Capsule" but plenty to revel in. Their near misses are other groups' golden moments. Four singles and 1 LP, and already they're 5 times better than more famous label-mates the Sugarcubes. KOD - you can only get lost in their musical fog. (7½)

- THE WEDDING PRESENT - "Kennedy" (RCA)
I know it's on a major label, but if ever a group epitomized the brilliance of indie pop, it's the Wedding Present. "Kennedy" presents a lyrical maturing for the Weddoes. No girl dumps boy - rather a blistering lament to the killing of JFK ("and now Ari's walked away with Johnny's wife.") The guitars are still zipping, but somehow this is a gigantic step forward. One of the year's best singles. (9½)

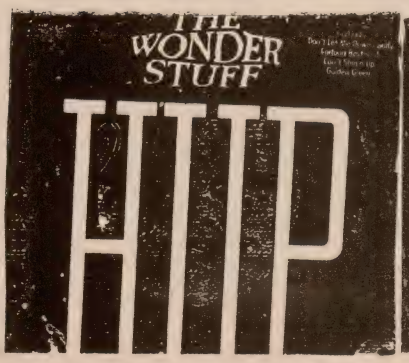
- MEGA CITY FOUR - "Awkward Kid" (Decoy)
The Megas produce another variety of their punk-pop thrash. This time out, it's more enjoyable than most of their Tranzophobia LP. However, I'm still waiting for this band to produce the so-called "classic" single that I believe they're capable of. (7)

- INSPIRAL CARPETS - "Move" (Cow)
A change of pace for the Inspirals - more psychedelic pop than garage. The organ is kept in check while the band try to formulate their sounds into chart potential. And I must say I enjoy it. Whereas live, IC's are stripped of all subtlety, on this record, it's their understatement that's so endearing. (7)

- BLOW UP - "Forever Holiday" (Cherry Red)
Yet another ex-Creation act who now sound like the 1980's version of the Rolling Stones - except the Stones sound better. This is a poor man's (both economically and musically) "Mixed Emotions." (2)

- THE FAT LADY SINGS - "Arclight" (Fourth Base)
Two issues back, I called their debut 45, "Fear and Favour," a classic. And now I'm here to tell you that this band has enjoyed a fair measure of success in their native Ireland. With that success has come more elaborate production and less urgency. Yet, this song is still a tremendous accomplishment. Nick Kelly's voice

THE WONDER STUFF
NEW 2ND LP HUP



THE BATS-DADDY'S
HIGHWAY COLLECTION

alone is worth the price of the record. And, it's a grower - repeated listenings reveal its beauty and strength. Plus, the 12" includes the original "Fear and Favour," so now you have no excuse not to buy. (8½) (33 Alexander Rd, Aylesbury, Bucks., hp20 2nr, England)

- THE POPGUNS - "Waiting for the Winter" (Midnight)
Though Wendy Popgun's voice is not for everyone, I've always found it refreshing. Conversely, I think all will agree that this 45 is ordinary. This thinking-woman's pop has its beguiling moments, but basically I've heard this before. Don't give up on them, but don't buy it either. (5½)

LABEL SPOTLIGHT

BY JEFF KELSON

SARAH RECORDS (Garden Flat, 46 Upper Belgrave Rd., Bristol BS8 2XN, England)

- BRIGHTER - "Around the World in Eighty Days"
- ORCHIDS - "What Will We Do Next?"
- THE GOLDEN DAWN - "George Hamilton's Dead"
- ST. CHRISTOPHER - "All of a Tremble"
- THE WAKE - "Crush the Flowers"

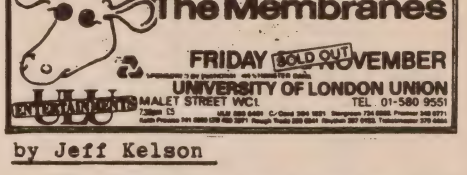
Sarah REcords deserves accolades for their steadfast resistance to putting out product which is trendy, marketable, and instantly disposable. Instead, this label has put out 23 or so 7" singles with attractive sleeves, free posters and subtle, quiet, and sublime slices of pop music.

Sarah #19 is Brighter's "eighty Days" ep, continuing the trend of sweet, reserved melancholia. Wistful vocals and enticing songs provide for an enjoyable listen. Best track is "inside out" which captures the moment. (7½)
St. Christopher's 2nd Sarah release is a gem. "All of a Tremble" is exactly that - all of a tremble. Penetrating and poignant, this is a record you can whistle and sing along to. The yearning vocals ("If it takes a thousand years, then I must try to...CATCH her) will have your heart captivated and your foot tapping. (8½)
Sarah's rebels are The Golden Dawn. They dare to have loud, fuzzy guitars and anything-but-subtle adventures. Also, they have just made one of Sarah's worst 45's. A throwaway song about an actor nobody cares about. For the Sarah completist only. (2) New signings, The Wake, are quite fun. Your mind will be saying "no, no," but your heart will be saying "yes, yes." It's like playing frisbee with your girlfriend on a bright spring day. However, the bright pop disguises foreboding lyrics that actually provide a little edge. One of the better produced Sarah records, with male/female alternating vocals. (7)
The Orchids' 3rd Sarah release is quite a jaunty affair - reminescent of early Creation band The Loft, and with an infectious chorus ("the world is crazy and so am I") that compares it favorably to this year's best. Raw, gripping, and understated, this is 10 times more powerful than most of those thrash 'n grab noise bands. I like it. I like it. (8½)

THE WEDDING PRESENT
PALE SAINTS
CUD
London Kilburn National
11/2/89 - by Jeff Kelson

Cud opened up the show with a performance as memorable as a Three's Company rerun. This was a regurgitation of every fast-paced indie band of the last few years. Actually, the singer has a strong voice, but it's wasted amidst shoddy songwriting & clumsy music. The show lasted 30 minutes which proved to be 31 minutes too long. The Pale Saints followed with a somber and reserved set. They definitely have the 4AD ethereal sound which they mix at times very well with a Jesus and Mary Chain-ish wall of guitars. It wasn't until their encore (yes, can you believe 4 people clapped and they came back on) that they started to demonstrate their potential. It was a blistering song which made their entire set prior to that seem superfluous. Maybe that's why they came back out. This is a band that sounds far superior on record.

All this was set up for a band that sounds 500 times better live than on record. The Wedding Present (whom I've always had a sweet tooth for) played a sold-out London Venue on the heels of their newly-released LP, Bizarro. Simultaneous with their "Hi, we're called The Wedding Present," the crowd broke into a joyous frenzy that I swear would have seismologists pulling out their Richter scales. The Bizarro opener "Brassneck" was so catchy and endearing that I was hooked from the start. It's almost as if the WP's run-away train guitars have slowed down in response to their more confident and mature songwriting. On older material, however, the guitars are still flying. "Nobody's Twisting Your Arm" was played so furiously it made the vinyl version sound like it plays on 16 rpm. Front man David Gedge had to shake out his hand to bring it back to life. What shocked me so much about the WP was just how great a front man Gedge is - and, just how tight the rest of the band is. With a drummer whose right hand flicks a drumstick faster than anything I've ever thought humanly possible, and a bassist and other guitarist who keep the frenetic pace in perfect unison, this band is SHARP. On new songs like "Crushed" and new single "Kennedy," the WP cross that threshold where you forget you're at a live show and you feel like you're experiencing something other-worldly. About this time, I started to conjure up memories of Jack's review of the Stone Roses. Gedge, like Jack's description of Ian Brown, possesses bundles of charisma, frenetic energy and strong vocals that make a band so dynamic and overpowering. The Wedding Present were in one word BRILLIANT. This band is truly at their peak. Why aren't bands like the WP and Stone Roses touring the U.S. now when we need them most? I can't keep affording Britain.



by Jeff Kelson

The Membranes were crap. Utter crap. And no one can change my mind. Loud, thrashy, trashy. Lacking any redeeming qualities.

Inspiral Carpets come on and hit you like a ton of bricks. Their brash, furious non-stop attack sounds like the Doors at a fraternity party, but only equipped with one song. I actually really like the Inspirals' singles. Yet live, their barrage does not lend itself to either soul, warmth or that certain something that endears one to a band. It's a very fine line between good and bad, and never was that more crystallized. Two-thirds of the way into the show, I still hadn't even tapped my foot or moved my head in unison with the music - this despite a manic, swirling organ, blinding strobe lights, and a cavalcade of video clips flashing their cow insignia, tabloid headlines and previous record covers (nothing like a little self-promotion, eh guys). Finally, their excellent single "Find Out Why" legitimized my attendance. It had body and soul and had my legs moving in rapid fire. However, this was one of few bright spots as the band proceeded to fall right back into their redundancy. The Inspirals need more diversity in their set. As of now, it's hard to discern if one song's ended or another's begun. I'll still buy their singles, but an LP might be too much.

EDWYN COLLINS
London Town & Country Club
11/5/89 - by Jeff Kelson

I've been waiting for this since 1980, when Orange Juice's "Blue Boy" had me spinning around my bedroom. I stuck with Edwyn through his indulgences with later OJ, and I have recently been excited by his tremendous solo LP, Hope and Despair.

Edwyn's new blue-eyed soul is mixed with his patented OJ guitar to form an exhilarating sound. The all-star band (featuring Dave Ruffy on drums & Dennis Bovell on bass) provides strong backing for Edwyn's second-to-none vocals. Edwyn opens with some of his lesser recent numbers before hitting pay dirt with "Ghost of a Chance" as his deep voice cascades through this "self-proclaimed first political song." Next, he delivers what everyone's been waiting for - an early OJ song. "Falling and Laughing" scorches, while tongue-in-cheek Edwyn goes through his fake rock star theatrics. Nine years later on, and he can't help but make the song sound incredible. In his joking way, he announces that he's the spokesman for aging punks and contends that his sound is the final resting station for those who remember the Clash, Buzzcocks & Sex Pistols. He then launches into "Wheels of Love," a soulful, Summer of Love psychedelic mixture that has the audience staunchly believing his rhetoric - I among them. "Don't Shilly Shally," "A Place in My Heart" and "Salmon Fishing in New York" round off a thoroughly entertaining evening of music. If this man ever stops making brilliant music, his charisma, humor and stage presence would certainly qualify him for a starring role in whatever lies ahead for aging punks.

THE HOUSE OF LOVE
SOMETHING PRETTY BEAUTIFUL
Middlesbrough Town Hall, England
11/6/89 - by Jeff Kelson

Something Pretty Beautiful is a new Creation band fronted by none other than Julian Cope's younger brother (an exact replica). The sound they create harks back to early Teardrop days, and I can't say I'm complaining. Even so, the band has a long way to go before attaining greatness. Lots of potential, though. Keep an eye on them.

I finally tracked down the wonderful House of Love in this godforsaken northeast corner of England (Akron, Ohio would be a reference pt.). The inebriated crowd (including a male streaker who jumped on stage) is treated to a set of mostly new HOL material from their long awaited, tricky 2nd LP. "Christine" and "Destroy the Heart" are played early and come across as if the band is tired of these songs. It isn't until the new stuff, such as the poignant "The Beatles & the Stones," that the HOL get into full gear. Guy Chadwick's voice and persona are inspiring and more invigorating than on record. The band travel down that well-trodden path of epic guitar pop with a sound you can feel. However, increasingly, these former darlings of the music press have been under intense pressure to produce the goods, and their 60-date tour of Britain is a showcase of their resiliency and new ideas. This is a well-rehearsed and tightly-knit unit, and their version of "Love in a Car" is a many-splendored thing. Since the HOL have never been to the U.S. (though offers of mega bucks to play the east coast abound), I'm quite happy to have witnessed their live gig. Not perfect, but quite enjoyable. Their forthcoming LP should see them visiting us sometime in 1990. Don't miss them.

R.E.M.-"STAND" (2ND RELEASE)ACOUSTIC FLIP

SNUFF-"NOT LISTENING ANYMORE" EP

THE SANDKINGS
Leicester Princess Charlotte
11/7/89 - by Jeff Kelson

A crowded pub and I'm awaiting the band who put out such singles as "Rain" and "Hope Springs Eternal," both sparkling gems of guitar pop. They open up with a punchy song that has "Wonder Stuff" written all over it. I'm sucked in - unsuspecting what's to follow. What's to follow is more Wonder Stuff and more Wonder Stuff - until I forget which band is playing. The rhythm section is tight, but only know one groove - that of the Wonder Stuff. The pretentious and obnoxious lead singer is a spitting image of Wonder Stuff's front man, Miles. By the 5th song, a terrible version of "Hope Springs Eternal," I feel like screaming out "get these imposters off the stage." Enough is enough. It was becoming unbearable, and I tried to wish away this eight-legged rubbish thing. I informed my partner that subsequent to "Rain," the Sandkings had undergone a change in lead singer, hence their new sound. She was then able to make sense of this band, and we were able to leave before the (gulp) encore.

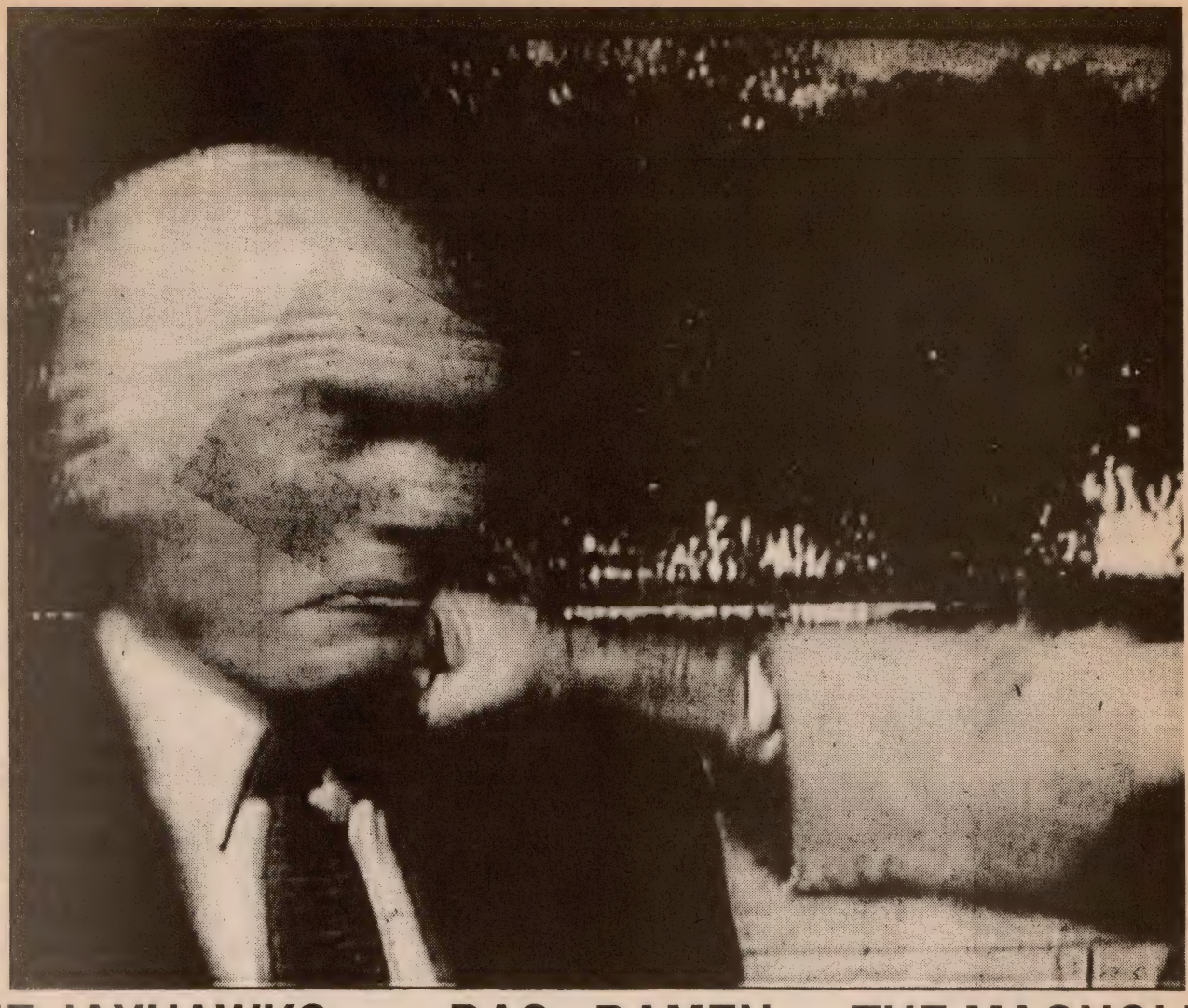
MAIL MAIL MAIL

STEVE FELLOWS CLARIFIES COMSAT ANGELS NAME CHANGE

Thanks for writing and sending me a copy of #26. The editorial piece about leaving your job was excellent, it's one of those things that I think everybody feels, but rarely gets articulated so well. I want to read more like this! Thanks also for your ridiculously flattering comments about our first 3 LPs. I don't trust praise but I can't deny I enjoy it.

My main reason for writing at this point, however, is to try and clear up an apparent misconception about why our group is changing its name. At the risk of boring you, I'll go through it all again. Basically, the whole problem would never have arisen had Communications Satellite Inc. not threatened us with legal action for breaching one of their copyrights, i.e. the trademark "Comsat," although as you know, the name came from a J.G. BALLARD story called "The Comsat Angels."

We had to take their threat seriously for two reasons. Firstly we were on the eve of a U.S. tour and they had said that they would injunct every promoter who was involved in the tour. Secondly, we were assured that U.S. copyright law and C.S.I.'s considerable financial resources would guarantee them a successful outcome to any action they might undertake in this matter. As we didn't (and don't) have millions of dollars to mount a defense, we had no choice but to comply with their demand that we avoid using the word "Comsat" in our name. Hence



THE JAYHAWKS
BLUE EARTH

DAS DAMEN
MOUSETRAP

THE MAGNOLIAS
DIME STORE DREAM

EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT

Twin/Tone RECORDS

"C.S. Angels" in the States. The problem with this was, and remains, that we HATE it; it's meaningless. Also, we effectively had one name in the States and another in the U.K. The legal position in other parts of the world is a further giant can of worms. We were told, however, that a case brought against us in England would be laughed out of court.

I suppose we should have tackled the problem years ago, but we didn't. Now we have to. Let's be honest about this. Our "profile," as they say, is practically zero just about everywhere, so what real difference will changing our name make? Most people will think it's a big "so-what," and rightly so, in my opinion. We will not try and hide the fact that we've been called The Comsat Angels 'til now, but we have a new record out soon, under a new name and our duty for the moment is to ensure that we have a future, not just a past.

We're still the same people, still trying to make the best music we can. Our comments to the effect that the name Comsat Angels is a millstone were perhaps a futile attempt to find a positive side to the situation (name change).

It's not a marketing trick, it's a king-sized pain in the arse, and we're sick of it. We just want to get on with playing music. God knows, we've wasted enough time as it is.

P.S. Oh yeah, thanks to **HERBIE HANCOCK**'s reappearance with a band of the same name, it doesn't look like it's going to be **HEADHUNTERS** after all. Any ideas? --**STEVE FELLOWS, COMSAT ANGELS,** Sheffield, U.K. (I stand corrected. Sure hope they can settle upon a name that no one else can lay claim to, it seems they have bad luck there. There was even a band called Headhunters in the early 80's in England, but unlike Hancock, it's doubtful that they'd come out of retirement to sue! In the meantime, we still await the new 7th LP (5th since Fellows and mates have more or less disowned the Land and 7 Day Weekend LPs as failed experiments), wonder what's taking Island so long to release it. Is the holdup the name change?--ed)

CALLING TIM SOMMER/DICKIES vs. DEAD MILKMEN

Read Tim Sommer's editorial on the so-called "new women in rock" and I have to say this: I think he's been reading my mind. I've been thinking that most women we've been reading about fall under the categories of waif/tough broad/slut; as Tim says. I've noticed that some writers have treated them by placing them in neat little slots, like a record company A&R person would. Thus I found this "women in rock" thing somewhat suspect. Female and male performers should be judged on the music itself, not on the roles they portray.

I also noticed that you put Dead Milkmen down by stating "you can't separate them from their humor since it's all they stand for," and yet you praise The Dickies. What do you call their songs, seriousness? Look, if you don't like Dead Milkmen, fine. I just want you to clarify your stance. The Milkmen have even cited Dickies as one of their influences. I like the Dickies myself.--**CHRIS KRAKORA, WEST CHESTER, PA** (Fair enough, I will. I don't see any comparison between the two any more than one can say that George Carlin and Andrew Dice Clay are similar merely because they are both comedians. Dickies are harmless, goofy, and fun. Their humor is very cartoonish and B-movie-ish, which is to say no one could ever take offense at their good-natured absurdities. Dead Milkmen also rely on humor for their lyrics, but it is a very different style. Theirs is bratty, cheap, and like much contemporary "comedy" seems more like a bunch of spoiled frat boys playing some dumb hazing stunt, with the attitude to match. They may be nice people, I have no idea. But I don't find it surprising that their NY fans abused **THE WIPERS** (who smartly showed no response), and The Wipers' fans (including me), in fact I predicted it. Attitude is the largest component of humor, how it's perceived, and what sort of people like it. I had to explain this once before as to why I like Meatmen and detest The Mentors. I don't find Dead Milkmen funny. That is merely opinion. But the main difference is attitude. Dead Milkmen just assume they're a riot, and it's a selfish, thoughtless center-of-the-universe variety that engenders their smug, "Fuck-you" kind of fans here. Dickies are more like great circus clowns who work for their laughs and project their comedy like an art. 2ndly Dickies are a great band. Many humorous records are awful musically, but Dickies have always been a truly great band even without the humor. I've never seen any musical appeal in Dead Milkmen. This is besides your point, but not surprising, since attitude shapes music as well!-ed)

MORE TIM SOMMER READERS

I really liked Tim Sommer's contributions to the zine (the column, for instance). I'd read somewhere, in an article about (the now late) **HUGO LARGO** that Tim was a music journalist, but this was the first time I'd seen anything by him. His column was very incisive. So it was a real shock to flip the channel to Post Modern MTV a couple of months ago only to see....Tim Sommer hosting the program! Weird, very weird. And I was real happy that he mentioned, along with **THE PIXIES** and **THROWING MUSES** (when talking about Boston groups) the late **LAZY SUSAN.** I couldn't believe it 'cause they only put out a demo tape before breaking up this past April - very localized. Now why would MTV do something as smart as hiring him? Well, you can pass on the praise.--**JEN MATSON,** ACTON, MA (Actually, since very few people can make a real living as a music journalist unless they write completely unreadable monstrosities which make no sense to anyone who likes music (the Christgau school, sad to say), Tim has worked for MTV Music News off and on for five years, and though he was never pictured, has conducted many of the interviews that appeared on the station (The **RAY DAVIES** one being a particularly special one for Tim). Finally, they got the bright idea to let him host the show, since he knows more about post modern (i.e. '76 punk explosion to present) music as anyone alive. Good thing, too, all the other hosts and VJs on that station apparently slept late the day they were giving out brains, it's nice to have one person on the station that doesn't come across as an airhead who probably sniffs coke instead of taking vitamins with their Fruit Loops. Tim probably came across Lazy Susan while in Boston working on the production of the new **HETCH HETCHY** LP with **MICHAEL STIPE,** who recently appeared on Post Modern to co-host the show with Tim. Johnny Rotten co-hosted a few weeks later. Real entertainment, those two. Finally, it's too bad no one makes a book of Tim's writings in Trouser Press, Sounds, New York Rocker, Daily News, Village Voice, Heavy Metal, Big Takeover, Smash Hits and elsewhere, it would beat the living crap out of that overplayed, overhyped, obnoxious **LESTER BANGS** book, oh you're so radical Lester. Yawn.--ed)

JOAN MCNULTY COMMENTS ON HER BUZZCOCKS ROIR TAPE

Thanks for the nice review of Buzzcocks Lest We Forget (that McNulty compiled-ed). I know there

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were things wrong with the tape and I have really solid reasons which I'll explain sometime. Great excuses. Generally, we would have liked to use some of the radio broadcasts like those you mentioned in your review, but the radio stations were impossible to deal with. Let your readers know about the impending November Buzzcocks' reunion tour.--**JOAN MCNULTY, BOSTON, MA** (Fair enough. The new box set Product on CD and LP does at last contain a radio broadcast live show, if only 1/3 of the gig, from London's Lyceum in '79. Still hope someone gets that 12/1/79 Palladium gig from WNEW New York and releases that someday, that's the all time killer. Buzzcocks reunion was the event of 1989, hands down--ed)

GEORGE BUSH THE ENVIRONMENTALIST

During the last presidential campaign, George Bush dubbed himself as "environmentalist," pledging to help clean up acid rain, to force toxic polluters to clean up after their waste, and various other legislation of this genre. But I smelled a bad fish from the start, because I already knew that Bush supported offshore drilling during his days as v.p. So when the Exxon Valdez spilled her oil last Spring, I did not think that there would be any major clean up effort. Yes, they did show a few workers hosing down the shoreline on the network news to make it look as though there was some major clean up project. But their publicity backfired when the State of Alaska took Exxon to court. And apparently the p.r. showed a contradiction when it was reported that the oil was still moving up the Alaskan coastline in mid-August. Also, very recently, a clean air bill was passed by Congress and signed by Bush. But the legislation is nothing more than a watered down version in order to enhance these polluters' images.--**ANGUS MCWHORTER, ST. LOUIS, MO.** (I'm not sure what prompted this letter, or whether Angus just blindly sends this to all publications, but since I basically agree and touched on the problem of a Bush presidency 2 or 3 issues ago, I'll print it just the same. The environment should be the number one priority, not drugs, and Bush's anti-drug speech was the closest thing to comedy his leadership's has produced aside from his stint as special lead guitarist with Lee Atwater's "we're not racists, even if it does win campaigns" boogie blues inaugural band. My solution is simple. Legalize drugs, 'cause that "war" is unwinnable, unrealistic, Quixotic and a waste of taxpayer money. Spend that money on rehabilitation, treatment and education, and spend the resulting tax revenue on cleaning up the earth. Drugs are about the stupidest thing you can do to yourself, but people are stupid, always have been, always will be. On the other hand, if our children and our grandchildren and their children are the victims of our increased environmental stupidity, if we destroy the ozone layer, burn the rest of the Amazon, and continue to dump hazardous wastes in our land, sea and sky, it will not matter much what to do about the drug problem, particularly with such a p.r. related media blitz "a couple of billion will take care of it" approach. Besides, no one has adequately explained to me why even a single river of this world should be polluted, why I shouldn't be free to swim in any river that I choose, as pristine and clear as pre-industrial times. There is never any excuse to foul our waterways, and in the case of an accident such as Valdez (careless or not), the entire bill should be footed by the company responsible. It is the most outrageous calamity that Exxon will write the expense off on their taxes, meaning you and I must pay the cost of their error, while Alaskans must pay the environmental cost of their disaster. Exxon is just laughing at us. If Bush really was an environmental pres instead of an old pal of Texan oil companies, he'd be as outraged as common sense dictates. Funny, you don't ever hear about Alaska these days. Old news I guess. Sure. And the deficit continues to rise. Thanks for your war on drugs. Hah! We spent billions more bailing out Savings and Loans! Now where's the equally phony war on environmental destruction? At least that pittance would be money well spent.--ed)

THATCHER DEATH PARTY

It feels a bit like 1978 here at the moment, **DEBBIE HARRY** on Top of The Pops, **BUZZCOCKS** reunion, **DYLAN** in vogue, etc. etc. Meanwhile I'm still listening to the **RONETTES**, "Shake Some Action (**FLAMING GROOVIES**--ed), **VAN MORRISON, MOCK TURTLES, PET SHOP BOYS, JIMMY REED** to name but 6. Loads happening politically, **THATCHER**'s government is under pressure in all sorts of ways. The Chancellor resigning, ambulance worker's pay claim, etc. My friend in Cambridge (the only person who I went to school with who I still keep in contact with) is going to have a party the night Thatcher dies ("Tramp the dirt down"), I'm going to be there - one way or another!!--**RICHARD LYSONS, ROCHDALE, GREATER MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, UK** (If Reagan was still in office, we might have a similar party. Now we've got Bush to contend with, just as bad. And if Bush dies, we get Quayle, which is even scarier. So maybe I'll just come to your party! Actually, the only good thing about Thatcher is, whenever I come to England and some of your countryman start giving me a hard time about our disgusting political leaders (as if I voted for them or something. shee!), I could always zap 'em back with "Yeah, and Maggie is so much better, right?" and that would shut 'em up pretty quick. And how 'bout those Flaming Groovies? I remember hearing that for the first time on some enlightened but fading little Jersey station years ago and thinking, "great song, funny name!" Never get tired of that great, great riff. Reed is my favorite old Bluesman too. "Hush Hush" and "Honest I Do" are so simple yet so terrific, they way I like it--ed)

PLENTY OF PEOPLE LOSE THEIR REASON OVER BUZZCOCKS

I would like to give my giddy thanks for telling me about Buzzcocks tour in your news column in the October issue of Alternative Press. As a result of your expertise, I was well aware of their Cleveland show before anyone else. OK, enough calmness. HOLYSHIT. THAT WAS THE FUCKING GREATEST SHOW OF MY LIFE, PAST AND FUTURE. IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS AND I'M STILL EXCITED. I CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF (Curious, that's the name of an old **TROGGS**' song Buzzcocks used to cover in '76--ed). I GOT **PETE**'S SWEAT TOWEL. **DIGGLE** THREW BEER ON US. THEY PLAYED "ORGASM ADDICT." **GARVEY** ALMOST RAMMED HIS BASS UP MY NOSE AND HIS MALE APPENDAGE IN MY MOUTH. **MAHER** LOOKED SO DEAD COOL BEHIND HIS KIT AND SUAVE SHADES. AND PETE SMILED AT ME FOR TWENTY SECONDS DURING "I DON'T MIND." Me, since I'm usually very calm, me! You know that Shea Stadium '64 footage (John Wells got the bootleg video for me--To think, Beatles walking across the infield instead of Tim Tuefel or Ed Kranepool. Amazing. But go on--ed)? Me but in a leather jacket (the author refers to all the girls fainting in the stands at the Beatles' show). Buzzcocks are the fucking best, along with **DOLLS** and **PISTOLS**, and it's a bit impossible that those two or even **THE CLASH** would ever reform.

Besides, they'd be crap if they did (maybe. maybe not--ed). Buzzcocks could never be crap, uncool or bad. They didn't do anything off Spiral Scratch but it didn't really matter. I wish! (they did "Boredom" on a number of dates on the tour, but not Cleveland-ed) I wish I could have shaken their hands and told them thanks, but it didn't work out. I think they got the idea from the grin on my face. It stretched to the fucking Grand Canyon, for Chrissake! No chance of more reunion shows from them? Could you keep us posted (looks like they're actually staying together-ed). I mean, it would be brilliant if they reformed for a while. Pete's twisted love songs never go out of style, do they? Thanks for the harmony in my head. OK, bad pun. Brilliant song. Brilliant! (Diggle will be happy to hear that--ed) God, I just can't get over it. Christ, it was the greatest. No even **LOU REED**, not even **IGGY POP**, not even the early **KINKS** are the Buzzcocks. My life is complete.--**JULIA HUGHES**, KENT, OH (aside from the sexual references to Garvey and his almost unexpected fellatio, one could be excused from suspicion that this letter is a phony, and is actually the editor hiding behind an alias. Nope, I've got the breathless scrawl of Ms. Hughes to prove it, though I won't deny that her words don't agree with my own sentiments! Perhaps I could recommend my sister as a psychiatrist for you. The reason I recommend her, is when we were growing up, she used to hate stuff like Buzzcocks whenever I played it on the family stereo, she's into Billy Joel, so it's unlikely you'll hear Buzzcocks in the waiting room while you're waiting for your appointment! I think we'd both agree that that would be catastrophic to your progress in those sessions. Take a few deep breaths, swallow hard, and make believe that you like fast cars and that you've never heard of Ralph Nader, that you know what to do in your life, and that you're convinced that there's plenty of love in this world, anymore. And if you don't mind, I won't mind. Uhhh. I can see this isn't helping you. Or me. Maybe we both should schedule appointments with my sister. Hey Barb! Can I have 4PM on Wednesday?--ed)

LAYOUT/BLACKBIRD

Reading your new issue was so much easier than in the past. The separation and heading titles make it so much better. I like the pictures of album and single covers. A glossy cover and more advertising too. Please don't go slick on us. Anyway the new layout is an IMPROVEMENT.

In May I had the pleasure of hearing Blackbird at Rajis in L.A. I was very very very impressed. Best band I've heard in a while (Everly Brothers meet The Sex Pistols).--**DOUG MILMAN**, Baldwin, NY (That's great to hear, 'cause lots of people rag on my layout, and with good reason. I possess no talent or training in these skills, nor do I have any artistic background. I readily admit that the layout is the least special attribute of the mag, but on the other hand, it's the best I can do, and I've been quite proud of how it's progressed over the years. Nice to think someone noticed, even if it isn't exactly Spy. As for Blackbird, I thought **DILS** were more Pistols/Everlys, but yes, this is just about as great.--ed

DEATH TO PAUL FOX, (XTC PRODUCER)

Yes! You were absolutely right about Paul Fox over producing XTC (new LP, Oranges and Lemons--ed). Having been an XTC nut for close to 9 years, I've always been amazed at how the most obvious things go right by most critics/reviewers. Skylarking was probably the best "pop" work around when it was released but it was ignored because of stupid labels like "quirky" or "Beatlesque." Now that "post-modern" is a viable commercial ploy (and that's all it is so don't kid yourselves, **CURE** lovers) everybody calls anything watered down "brilliant" or "Slightly ahead of it's time." Hey assholes, time travel hasn't been invented yet. And why, oh why do things that are truly innovative (like **WIRE**'s 154 and **HAPPY FLOWERS**) go without any mention???--**RICH WAYNE**, TRENTON, NJ (Can't say I agree with you about Happy Flowers, yuck, but the sentiment is really true, and 154 is one of the top 50 LPs of all time (my #1 for 1979). You're right, what few mentions you see of Wire skip right over that LP as if it were never recorded! Skylarking blows away the new LP, I agree there too, and I do believe that Fox was to blame, 'cause the material was almost as good. Lately I've been listening to that new LP a lot, some of the stuff like "Chalkhills and Children" get to me as much as "Another Satellite" or "1000 Umbrellas," wouldn't you know that's the least slickly produced thing on the record? I guess you could say it worked, since it brought XTC the gold LP they've always richly deserved (at least since Drums and Wires and Black Sea), but thanks to the production, it just doesn't last as long as their real classic LPs. Give me "Respectable Street" or "Grass" over "Mayor of Simpleton" anyday!--ed)

TIPS FOR TROUSER PRESS

I read some of your reviews in the new Trouser Press Guide and I like them a lot! Tell (editor) **IRA ROBBINS** he should print a supplement each year so we don't lose three years of stuff when we have to wait for a new one.--**TED SICHELMAN**, NEW PORT RICHEY, FL (I'd be glad to pass that along, but I fear that Herr. Robbins would chase me down the street with a hatchet screaming for my scalp. No seriously. He's an overworked hombre, it's amazing he even gets it out as often as he does, that's a huge book! Like Volume with reviews!--ed)

DAMNED OLD DAMNED

I saw The Damned at The Living Room here in Providence. I thought they'd be aged punkers with beer bellies. But my goodyness they were amazing! Extremely tight show, they never slowed down for a second. Sweat was flying everywhere. People were flying everywhere. It was weird seeing **DAVE VANIAN** sans long hair. **CAPTAIN SENSIBLE** was a "dirty tosser" and said "it was rotten in '76. You weren't there." Yeah. True. Not our fault, is it? But it was so great to see a glimpse of an era gone by, yet it being still alive and so fresh - and only ten bucks! God Bless 'em! Best show I've seen.--**LESLI BARTHOLOMEW**, Providence, RI (Sounds much like their NY Ritz show. Seeing **BRIAN JAMES** playing "See Her Tonight" with Sensible back on bass was one of the highlights of the year. --ed)

DRUMMER JOURNALISTS/OLD SAINTS LP

You continue to put together one of the finest of mags available. Being a one-time drummer myself, I find it interesting that the creators of two of my favorite mags, yours and Noise For Heroes are drummers; I wouldn't be surprised to hear that **ART BLACK** (whatever happened to him?) drums also. Don't lose too much money if you're still avoiding being a wage-slave. P.S. I listen to **SAINTS**' Eternally Yours about everyday, thanks for the recommendation.--**JAMIE COWLES**, MADISON, WI (Ahh, that sweat taste of digestion, nothing pleases quite like it. If you are listening to "Know Your

Product," "I'm Misunderstood," "Untitled," "This Perfect Day" etc. everyday that's pretty damn great. Still think that was one of the most advanced punk records of all time, one that you didn't have to like punk to really think it was a killer rock 'n' roll record. Haven't seen Art in a while, and that huge publication of his is obviously a backbreaker, 'cause he's always threatening to just be done with the pain of it all, but we remain hopeful that a new Away From the Pulsebeat is in fact in preparation at this very moment. Don't think he plays any instrument though. Actually, though, when people who know my writing discover that I play in a band as well, they usually automatically assume that I'm a singer/guitarist/songwriter or otherwise lead the group, since rock writers in bands invariably do, **PRETENDERS, ATV, GIBSON BROS, YO LO TENGO, HUGO LARGO, SNIVELING SHITS, BIG BLACK/RAPEMAN, YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS** etc. But though I write a good deal of our lyrics, I'm just the lowly drummer in Springhouse, way in the back. No one can say it's "my" band other than I'm coincidentally in it. I like that. Glad you like the mag.-ed)

FUGAZI FAN

Just wanted to comment on Fugazi, one of the best bands in the country at the moment. I can definitely hear those comparisons to **RUTS D.C./RUTS**, especially on the 1st record. The new record brings **JOY DIVISION** circa "Shadowplay" to mind, especially on **IAN MACKAYE**'s songs. I talked to **GUY PICCIOTTO** after their Maxwells show. It seems he smashed his head against a cymbal during the last song, he almost knocked himself out. Trying to talk to him was like trying to talk to one of **MIKE TYSON**'s opponents after a fight. Anyway, he is nice, and his string of bands (**RIGHTS OF SPRING, ONE LAST WISH, HAPPY GO LICKY**) compare well with Ian's. P.S. What's **STEVE DREWETT** up to? --RICH KIMBALL, CRANFORD, NJ (Guy is probably like that after every show, cymbal or no cymbal; the way he whips himself into a frenzy, he'd probably have a better chance against Tyson than most of those stiffs he's been using for a punching bag. Former **NEUROTICS**' Drewett is fronting a new band, **THE INDESTRUCTIBLE BEAT**, which nicely combines the old sound with some new African and dub spices. You'd probably like it, strange as it sounds in description.--ed)

MARK BURGESS MAIL

God, I've been listening to **CHAMELEONS**' Strange Times like 3 times a day, when Burgess sings "You're all that matters to me/You own my soul completely" during "In answer," my knees just melt. Then that build-up, fantastic! Thanks for turning me on to them! Shit!--GREG DUNLOP, THIS MAGAZINE, DEKALB, IL (Yeah, that gets me every time too, suckers that we are! Few people could sing that line without turning your stomach worse than antibiotics. Burgess had a remarkable ability to make one believe his deepest sentiments. That whole LP is such an emotional rollercoaster, that's why I think it's their best. Knees don't always buckle so easily, that's for sure!--ed)

MARK BURGESS, A GREAT SONGWRITER

I especially enjoyed the interview with Mark Burgess. I've always thought he was one of the special songwriters of this time. "Soul in Isolation," "Singing Rule Britannia," Paradiso" - Intense, powerful compassionate music. I mourn the loss of both his groups and only wish him well. We need others of his ilk! And I sincerely hope that your next issue will be on time - because it is awful to have to wait 'til December to finish the interview."--CHRISTINE YOUNG, PALO ALTO, CA (Never fear, December is here. It is really gratifying to see so many responded to last issue's interview, it seems Mark and Steve Diggle have gotten the most letters from their interviews. They have unknown admirers all over the country. Both really deserve it! A few people remarked about The Last and Question interviews, not via mail, but Mark's interview really seems to have struck a chord--ed)

MARK BURGESS FAN CLUB

I recently purchased your magazine for the first time and was quite impressed with the insights and your own inimitable madcap humor. What inspired me the most, however, was the initial interview with ex-**CHAMELEONS** Mark Burgess. Though Mark was somewhat arrogant, I entirely agree with him. The Chameleons were the greatest band ever from the U.K. and undoubtedly the world. **RED** and **DAVE** are the greatest guitarists ever put to vinyl. Their dreamy, ethereal music coupled with Mark's lyrics (sorry - philosophies) have inspired me for years. To me, they represent the songs of life. Whenever I lay on a secluded, sunny beach, "Silence, Sea and Sky" plays endlessly in my head. The same with "Second Skin" at dusk on a winter's evening.

Anyway, thanks for such a stellar interview. Mark Burgess is, and always will be, my hero. I can't wait for part 2. Until then, keep up the good work.--**STEVE NUNZIATA**, VERONA, NJ (We lost a freshman baseball game to Verona in '77 when I played for Summit that still puts a lump in my throat to this day, but I won't hold it against you. Damn! Anyway, I'll add one to your list. How 'bout "Intrigue in Tangiers" at dusk on a summer's evening? Here's part 2, dig in. His letter is desert. Madcap humor? Moi? Shucks!--ed)

PAGING MARK BURGESS

As usual, it will probably take a month or so to THOROUGHLY read your mag, but I have read the Mark Burgess interview 2 or 3 times already. All I can say is wow! Definitely heavy stuff. DEFINITELY. I can remember in Cleveland on their last tour in '87, it seemed Mark was very uncomfortable. He never said anything to me, but **ANDY CLEGG** (later **SUN AND THE MOON**, guitarist, then **CHAMELEONS**' roadie) hinted a bit about problems. But your interview astounded me. It was incredible how open and honest Mark was about the whole situation. I hope he knows how much his fans and friends value that. I'm sure it was a difficult task for him, to dredge up obviously still painful memories. If there could be any final resolution, I would hope that everyone involved could at least come to an understanding, and realize that they all dealt with a volatile situation in the best way they knew. I do hope that Mark is able to find a label willing to support

PETE SHELLEY-NEW 45 "HOMOSAPIEN II"

SUN AND THE MOON- SELF TITLED LP

him. I'll join the chorus of people saying that the Chameleons were one of the VERY BEST guitar bands, and that no matter what projects each member now finds himself in, the parts will never equal the sum, but all the same I hope they find success. You can probably tell that I'm still a bit speechless about what was said."--**SUSAN TANNER**, DORCHESTER, MA (Uh, me too! And I was there. After the interview I walked around Rochdale just a little bit dazed. Though I didn't get run over by any double decker buses or anything, I didn't really see where I was going either!--ed)

MORE BURGESS MANIA/WORK EDITORIAL

Everything was excellent as usual in the mag. By the way, I did get the limited edition **CHAMELEONS** Strange Times LP with the 6 bonus tracks. Sad to see **SUN AND THE MOON** split up. Looking forward to Part 2 of The Mark Burgess interview. He must have really poured out his soul to you. I don't think I've ever read an interview quite like that one! There's a syndicated Canadian radio show I tuned into called "Nightlines" and they played "In Shreds" and some old **COMSAT ANGELS.** Incredible.

Your "work" editorial was right on the mark. I just had my two week vacation and it went by faster than hell. I know what you mean about halfhearted attempts at other jobs when you already have one. I'm sick of my job and I'm looking for another one but I could be trying harder than I am. Maybe I should just quit!--**BEN SZPORLUK**, ANN ARBOR, MI (I don't know if using me as a model is a good idea, even though things really worked out for me. If you really are as fed up as I was, to the point where you're constantly boiling over, go ahead, quit, you'd probably be better off. Just walk out the door and face your fear, it's smaller than you think. Remember, though, I saved up some money first. That's never a bad idea! Looking for a job when you're broke can be as harrowing as having a horrible one!--ed)

MARK BURGESS MAILBOX/BIG TAKEOVER COVERAGE

Congratulations on an incredible interview with **MARK BURGESS.** I think it was one of the best and most enlightening you've done. I enjoyed it immensely. I give Mark credit and I find it kind of sad to hear that someone of his talent has no money and is in debt, at least he seems happy. I'm eagerly awaiting part 2. It also amazes me how someone can write you, accusing you of being a hypocrite. Although you do have your favorite type of music, you have covered other styles of music than what Paul Narvarez said in his letter. I think he totally missed your point. Besides, to put the amount of time and work and dedication you do into each issue for no monetary gain whatsoever (probably a loss), I think people should praise you rather than criticize. I could see if you were in it for the money. I couldn't do what you do and I think most people who criticize you can't either. Even though you don't cover all types of music, you seem quite aware of the different styles around, it doesn't mean you're narrow minded.--**STEVE REA**, SPRING VALLEY, NY (Though it's nice that you see it my way, thank you, Navarez' dissenting opinion is perfectly valid. There is enough praise that comes in, all of which warms my ice cold heart, but as editor my responsibility is to print intelligent criticism like his. I could cover a more broad spectrum, but to the potential determent of the magazine, I choose not to. Yes, I lose money, but that's just because I'm too stupid and too stubborn to do this properly with a large staff, advertising director, etc. Something inside me prefers to keep it more informal, more of a life's work hobby. At any case, one can never dismiss criticism, one can only consider its validity and adjust accordingly. The goal is to improve, I know Paul is merely trying to point out what he perceives to be the error in my ways. It is my fiefdom, and I thank him for that, even if I disagree.-ed)

CHAMELEONS vs. GEFFEN

Nice zine...not a great layout, but neat stuff..especially the interview with "Birdy" (**MARK BURGESS**). I bought the Fan and The Bellows LP and I only paid $7.99 for it! Some fool forked out $600.00 for a Chameleons LP! Yikes. I hope **SUN AND THE MOON**'s last EP Alive Not Dead makes it to the U.S. as an import (it did, sparingly--ed). Personally I can see why Chameleons and Sun and The Moon didn't care for Geffen Records. During the Strange Times tour (I picked Strange Times for LP of the year in '86, by the way), I was to see them live and then do an interview for Jet Lag magazine...their road manager assured me that I had a free pass for myself and two friends. So we drive 40 miles to the show, no name on the list. We ask for the manager, and he comes out and tells me that Geffen has pulled out all press support! So we had to pay, and we never got to interview the band. It's also a shame that Strange Times is now out of print, and has never been CDed. The show was at One Step Beyond in Santa Clara in March 1987.--**BRAD BRADBERRY** (the author also writes for Option and other mags), BOULDER CREEK, CA (A lot of us bought that LP for $7.99 for that two week stretch it was suddenly on the market without Chameleons' permission, but it disappeared as fast as it came, so some psycho-diehards will probably still be paying ludicrous sums for it.--ed)

GENERAL COMMENTS/MORE BURGESS REACTION

The last issue is the first one I've had a chance to see, and I have to say I love it. I've noticed that you've been at it for about a decade, and there's not a trace of cynicism in your writing. That's refreshing. It's so nice to read about something I love so much from someone else who obviously does too.

My favorite thing about last issue was the Mark Burgess interview. Just in-fucking-credible! What a great experience it must have been to speak so candidly with him - on his own turf even! I am about the biggest Chameleons fan ever (besides you), but I've never even heard of some of the song titles you two talked about, I've missed a lot of b-sides and rarities.

In closing I'd just like to add how much I'm looking forward to the new issue. I read every single word of the last issue twice. The bands you turned me on to this time were: **MEGA CITY 4, ED KUEPPER, WIPERS** among others. The music I'm listening to most these days is Independent Projects and Flying Nun stuff, though it's harder to get a hold of now that I'm moved from L.A. Thanks for promoting the scene out here in Chicago as you do. There are just a ton of great bands I'm finding. I really like **ELEVENTH DREAM DAY, SMASHING PUMPKINS** and **BHANG REVIVAL.** What do you know about the English **BODINES**? They used to be on Creation, then Magnet, then they disappeared--**STEVE MEACHAM**, CHICAGO, IL (Don't know what happened to them, they used to be quite a favorite of mine as well. And I hate the U.S. Bodeans, good thing they're spelled differently 11th Dream day just signed to Atlantic by the way. Some of the Chameleons' song titles

discussed like "Things I Wished I'd Said," "The Healer," "Is it Any Wonder" etc., were great songs that were never released. Something should be done about that, but nothing is likely so long as Dave and Mark don't get along, and no record companies see a quick, cheap profit. It was a great experience, mostly for the reasons you stated, but also because the cafe was so great, the only place I've seen that charges like 35 cents for a cup of great coffee, then allows you to dump as much chocolate as you like in it! And I love being in England, so much nicer than here. Poor guy came in drenched from head to toenail, and I with not a towel to offer. DON'T expect any cynicism from me in the near future either. If only 5 records or bands appear that I like, and I detest everything else, then I will cover those 5, and in the meantime read all the other **EMILE ZOLA** novels that I haven't gotten to yet. Life is never short of zest, it's just the flavors always change. Besides, as I say every issue, so much as one letter like yours that says I introduced you to a band as truly remarkable as The Wipers is enough to fill me up with another 6 months worth of satisfaction. We have never met, and yet this you have somehow received from me. Isn't that too good to be true? You read this twice? Jeez! Can you still see straight?--ed)

WILL MARK BURGESS WIN THE STANLEY CUP?

The Burgess interview is great. Had me on the edge of my seat waiting for the second installment. Though you've done this is past issues, for the novice what is/are the essential Chameleons' discs? Also, how do you view **SPLIT ENZ** and **SQUEEZE**? Not many good releases in the past few months, a fact I think it reflected in your reviews last issue. Really like the **FUGAZI** EP, Really don't like the **WIRE** LP. Also, think the new **SCRAWL** LP is great. Should've been in your "top 35." P.S., How 'bout them Rangers???--B. WARREN, Lockport, IL (I assume you refer to the Rangers' hot start, winning 8 of their first 9. Well now they're 13 and 9. It's been 49 years since the Rangers last won the Stanley Cup, even my Dad doesn't remember it. We Ranger fans learn to be cynical about solid Ranger play early in the season, really I think Mark Burgess has as much chance of winning the cup this year, and he's not even in the National Hockey League, so what does that tell you (I'll bet he could beat The Islanders though, hee hee)? Top 35 is compiled from what I listened to the most, no other criteria. That should be the goal of every record buyer, to find records one doesn't easily tire of, so that's what I recommend. Lots of mixed reaction to Wire, but I'm still playing their last 2 albums a lot, you're entitled to your opinion, but I believe most people don't like them 'cause they want another Pink Flag or Chairs Missing, records they discovered many years after Wire themselves had moved on as people, when in reality 154 was the pivotal Wire before they went their separate ways in 1980. The new stuff strikes me as being 154 with a dance beat rather than a rock beat, which is OK with me, as long as they keep the strong material and tough, weird sounds coming. They still put a lot of peculiar atmosphere in their sound, and to me that is what appeals about them, regardless of what pop form they choose. All Chameleons records are essential, there's just 3 LPS and the singles, all of which except the debut "In Shreds" appeared on the 3 LPs. Strange Times is best ('87), What Does Anything Mean Basically '85 next best, Script of The Bridge '83, 58 mins. next, though all 3 form a mighty trio. Never liked Split Enz, not much

BACK OF SLEEVE TO BUZZCOCKS' SPIRAL SCRATCH EP (1976)

BACK OF SLEEVE TO NEW "BUZZCOCKS' FAB 4" SINGLES EP (1989)

of a fan of Squeeze, though you'd have to be a deaf and dumb dolt not to adore "Pulling Muscles From a Shell" and a good many of their singles. Besides, **DIFFORD AND TILBROOK** were on this TV show last night and they did **THE HOLLIES'** amazing "King Midas in Reverse" single acoustically. Very cool!--ed)

L.A. IS THE LIVE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE U.S.

Recently, I saw **SHIVA BURLESQUE** at Raji's, a little hole off of Hollywood Blvd. It's a pretty cool club, only too many pathetic drunks "live" there. The **JEFF DAHL** group opened They were OK. I saw **45 GRAVE** here last year when they recorded the live CD. Oh! I saw the always great **DICKIES** at the Coconut Teaser a while back. It's like a house, 200-250 capacity. The place was an oven, but it was great. Only bummer being the muscle-headed jocks who feel the need to "control the pit." Ugh. I tried not to notice them. The Dickies as **LEONARD** so eloquently put it "are punk-rock gods!" Also saw **RED TEMPLE SPIRITS** at the Zombie Zoo. This is your typical death rock type place. They were amazing, for me, as usual. They are, without a doubt, my favorite local band. I saw a hardcore show, **GWAR, BAD RELIGION, FLOWER LEPERDS, GREEN JELLO** and some other name/faceless hardcore (I loathe that term, hardcore) bands. also, the **ADOLESCENTS** are doing another reunion gig...Yup, call me a fool, but I'm going. STOP THE PRESSES: **BUZZCOCKS** at Santa Monica Civic Center next week! I knew I was staying alive for a reason! Wait! Buzzcocks at the Ventura County Theater, an hour drive away the next night! Yeah! Fuck high door prices, my values go out the window for The Buzzcocks! Yeah! (you said it, brother--ed) Oh, excuse me there. Oh yeah, **JOE STRUMMER** is playing the Santa Monica Civic Center the next night (yeah, funny enough, Strummer and Buzzcocks played New York on successive nights too, ironic since Buzzcocks supported **CLASH** on each's 1st ever tour, in England, The "White Riot" tour in early 1977--ed). Face it, the scene here has been dead for a long time, and I'm glad. Give me my reunion gigs, some new, creative non-scene bands and I'm fine.--MIKE REES, ENCINO, CA (One person's dead is another's roaring. I've always loved visiting L.A. and London 'cause there's like 15-20 clubs (even more in London) that book the sort of music I like on a regular basis, compared to New York, with about 4. Also, unlike NY, both LA and London have so many local bands I like, I would probably have seen you at all the shows you went to if I lived there! So don't say it's dead, you insult people who live in Wyoming you know! Or Western Kansas. Bet they haven't seen Red Temple Spirits anytime recently! Much less the great Bad

Religion! Or the "mighty" (I'll go along with that) Dickies. Man, I can't wait to go back to L.A. next month over X-mas. Gaslight club, here I come!--ed)

"Sorry to disagree with you but I love "Talent Show" by **REPLACEMENTS**! OK, so it's not "IOU," "Hold My Life," or the wonderful "I Will Dare" (or the crunching "Takin' a Ride" and "Kids Won't Follow"--ed), and maybe they should've opened with something else - "Anywhere's Better Than Here" gets my vote - but it's still a great song. And yes, they did beat the hell out of it on that ABC TV Awards Show. By the way did they censor that line "We're feeling good from the pills we took?"...It's nice to hear you admit you like Los Angeles. Sounds strange coming from a New Yorker though!--**PATTY DADAMO, Laguna Niguel, CA.**

(Sure I like L.A., so many great shows, so many great local bands, nice weather year round, lots of good friends, more sensibly relaxed pace of life, less filth. So what smog, the air quality in New York is just as offensive! What keeps me from moving is that one can't walk anywhere in L.A., and public transportation is all but nonexistent. Life spent in automobiles on crowded freeways is a life wasted! So anti-social, and so much more expensive! Worst of all, fossil fuel transportation is killing our environment, and L.A. often seems like one giant traffic jam!...Yes, Replacements were censored. I don't like drugs, but that's clearly a violation of free speech. Show me the obscenity in that lyric! Oddly enough, they asked **PAUL WESTERBERG** not to sing it, and he didn't, but they censored it anyway 'cause they didn't believe him when he promised not to! Then he put in some obscenities later, so he had the last laugh! Good for you Paul!)

INK DISEASE CHECKS IN

As happens every 6 months now, I've just spent hours and hours reading your writings, Mr. Rabid. Now I'm musically revitalized for a while. I mean it, Jack, you keep some of us going when we start to really believe there's no reason to follow music. What fools we are, to let apathy encroach upon us like that!

Regarding editorial #2. I find it interesting that of the bands you mentioned as being reasonably close to "hitting it big" only **THE REPLACEMENTS** are American. Why is that American airwaves are more receptive to British bands. MTV's 120 Minutes is almost completely British bands. (I despise that program, by the way, not because of the above reason----hell most of my favorite bands are British, Stranglers, Fall, Jam, etc., but because it pawns itself off as being alternative, when really all it is is a Top 40 like rotation of lesser known major label acts, and the same videos play week after week, and most of them are weak!) I'm just curious about this.

And your column about quitting your job was spot-on. Just 4 months ago I started a job. I loved it at first, before I got used to having the money. Now I find I'm working 55-60 hours per week (63 last week) doing something that offers little or no personal satisfaction for me. I've got no time during the week to do the things I want to do, and even when I do get off work early enough to get out and do something, I'm just too tired or apathetic about it. People who've never experienced this just don't understand what it's like. I didn't know until recently. Now I see, not only am I not able to keep up this schedule, I'm also unwilling to keep it up. It's beyond being a question of money. Now it's a question of how long 'til I quit. But other people won't understand. Even some people who I thought had more sense cannot see past this middle class work ethic. ("Just shut up and work, be happy with what you've got") and tell me I'd be stupid to quit. 5/7 of my week is dedicated to having a good time with the other 2/7...how depressing that is! I admire you for quitting Jack. I'm gonna do it soon, too.

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS played a couple shows at the beginning of the month here in L.A., as well as a show in S.F. The July 4th show was an unadvertised one at The Whiskey. Really good stuff. It's just a pity that they don't write new material. I get the impression that they're afraid to, that maybe they think they "don't have it in them anymore," but I could be wrong.--**BRIAN TRUDELL, INK DISEASE**, L.A., CA (Ink Disease is one of my favorite magazines, so it's nice to get this letter. Hope Brain has quit by now, compared to his job I had nothing to complain about. SLF don't really exist, they don't live in the same town and don't rehearse or record when they're not touring. They just play shows when the demand is there and they feel like it. Lots of bands like that. I will say that, however, it is doubtful they would write new songs the way they're going, because they ignore their later material, and just play their older punk stuff which was much more popular. It would be stupid to write more old punk songs now, but the public is nostalgic about them as a punk band. Nobody seems to want them back so they can play their parting Now Then, a great hard pop record that was rejected by their fans in '82. They say there's no reason why they ignore that last LP on their reunion tours, but really, I think it's "give the people what they want" based on the past, and that I suppose makes sense, if it leaves old fans like us wishing they'd play a complete cross section. Oh well, at least you get to see them! When was the last time you saw Generation X (who never played a gig in this country, but played Japan!)? As for English bands on 120 minutes, it's cause it's easier to be popular and get a buzz going in England with an "alternative" sound. What it took Replacements 4 or 5 LPs (years) to do in terms of getting the press and public awareness, it took Smiths, Stone Roses, Bunnymen, etc. one measely LP to do! You can be on the cover of the NME and be before the masses with 2 indie singles that do well over there (Case in point: Mega City 4). When was the last time you saw Bad Brains on the cover of Rolling Stone after 12 years? Having proven their ability to be big fishes in a smaller pond (UK), the U.S. record companies sign UK bands thinking that they could also be big fishes in our bigger pond. They've proven they can sell records in a market faster than any small-fry U.S. indie band. Things are changing now, though. The US labels are starting to sign up every indie band that walks, and 120 Minutes is as much **OCEAN BLUE, INNOCENCE MISSION, TOAD THE WET SPROCKET**, etc, etc, bands that seemingly come out of nowhere and are OK but are not that good compared to their obvious UK influences. And then there's your **LEMONHEADS, SONIC YOUTH**, etc. You'll be seeing more of them from now on too. Perhaps the English have a greater songwriting and pop tradition going back to the British Invasion, while our alternative scene wallows more in anti-melody and the metallic (from **HAPPY FLOWERS** to **FETCHIN' BONES** to **MUDHONEY**). I don't know, these are just theories. Yes, almost all videos are boring, particularly compared to just listening on one's stereo, and 120 Minutes is useless and pathetic to those of us who live in urban cultural

centers with easy and constant radio and consumer access to alternative music. As I point out in the editorial in this issue, though, that's a small percentage of the country, and 120 minutes is the only place most young people will ever hear that there's something even marginally better than **MADONNA, DEF LEPARD, NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK, PAULA ABDUL** and **GUNS AND ROSES.** They need at least this introduction if you ever expect them to join you in loving the hundreds of more obscure bands that you are excited about. No seed = no flower, much less a whole garden! Keep the issues coming!--ed)

JON WELLS' TOP TEN LIVE SHOWS 1989

1. **LUCINDA WILLIAMS,** (from Los Angeles, The Breakaway, Mar Vista, Ca.) 7/8/89. Lucinda at her best - SRO crowd of 50! Band (minus guitarist **GURF MORLIX,** unfortunately) was tight. **LINDLEY**'s drums really kicked on this night. Especially enjoyed covers of **IAN TYSON**'s "Four Strong Winds" and **DYLAN**'S "Positively 4th St." Lucinda made them her own. Wish they'd been released on her EP (oh well).

2. **BUZZCOCKS,** (from Manchester, England, New York, Philadelphia, Trenton and Washington D.C.) 11/10 - 11/13. Very excited for these shows, my first time seeing them, and I wasn't disappointed. Night after night they got better. The last show I saw (DC) they began playing "Orgasm Addict" which was great to hear. Anyway, if you want to read more about Buzzcocks, look at the rest of this mag! 3. **MATTHEW SWEET,** (from Lincoln, Ne., MK's, New York City) 9/25/89. First show in a while for Sweet, who is extremely prolific - currently sorting through over a hundred songs to decide which to record for next A&M LP. This show was acoustic and not publicized much. Interesting place for a show, but $5 beers? Sweet played mostly new songs, save for a couple from Earth. New songs sounded great.

UNIVERSAL PRESENTS

BUZZCOCKS

ORGINAL LINE UP

PETE SHELLEY STEVE DIGGLE JOHN MAHER STEVE GARVEY

THURSDAY 7TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
BIRMINGHAM HUMMINGBIRD

TICKETS £6.50 IN ADVANCE AVAILABLE FROM THE HUMMINGBIRD, TEL: 643 4236 THE ODEON, TEL: 634 6106 MIKE LLOYD MUSIC, TEL: (0902) 27567 POSTER PLACE, TEL: (0203) 226176 TEMPEST, TEL: 236 9170 TICKET SHOP, TEL: 643 2514 OR ON THE NIGHT

FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
APOLLO THEATRE

TICKETS £6.50 IN ADVANCE AVAILABLE FROM THE BOX OFFICE, TEL: 061-273 3775 AND PICCADILLY RECORDS, TEL: 061-236 2555 OR ON THE NIGHT

SATURDAY 9TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
BRIXTON ACADEMY

TICKETS £7.50 IN ADVANCE AVAILABLE FROM THE BOX OFFICE, TEL: 326 1022 CREDIT CARD BOOKINGS: PREMIER BOX OFFICE, TEL: 240 0771 L.T.B. TEL: 439 3371 KEITH PROWSE, TEL: 741 8989 STARGREEN, TEL: 734 8932 TICKETMASTER, TEL: 379 4444 (24 HRS) ALBEMARLE, TEL: 580 3141 T & C STATION, TEL: 284 1221 ROCK ON RECORDS AND ROUGH TRADE RECORDS OR ON THE NIGHT

MONDAY 11TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

TICKETS £6.50 IN ADVANCE AVAILABLE FROMUNIVERSITY BOX OFFICE TEL: 091 232 8102 VOLUME RECORDS SUNDERLAND, DURHAM, NEWCASTLE, OLD HITZ RECORDS R.P.M RECORDS

TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
GLASGOW BARROWLANDS

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WEDNESDAY 13TH DECEMBER, AT 7.30 P.M.
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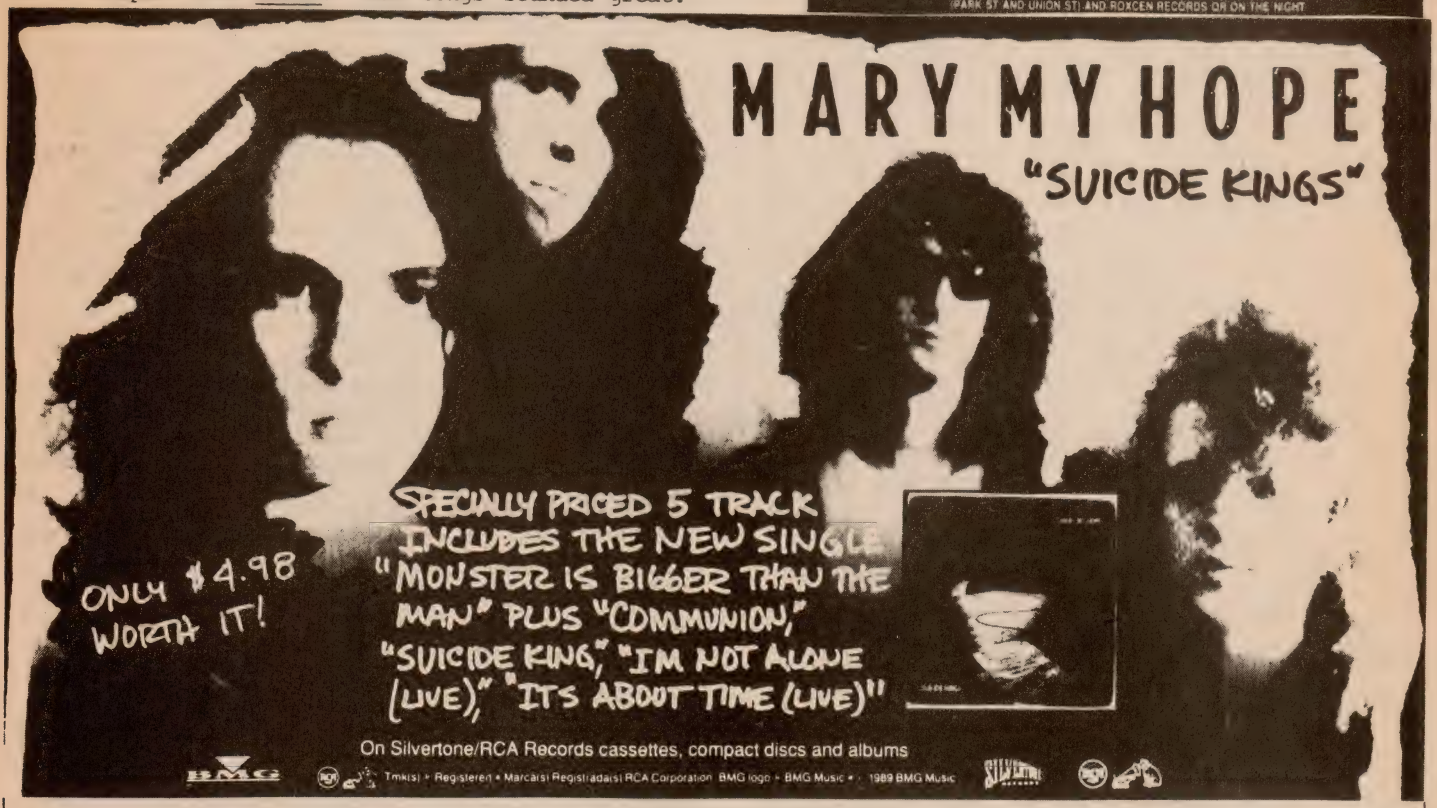

Anxiously awaiting next record. Matthew will soon be touring with **LLOYD COLE** in Europe and here.

4. **DARDEN SMITH AND BOO HEWERDINE,** (from England and Texas, Bottom Line, New York) 11/10/89. Surprisingly good debut LP from this duet of Smith, a country singer from Texas, and Hewerdine from England's **BIBLE.** They're even better live! Opening show for Lucinda Williams they played 45 minute set, mostly from the album, but they're still writing songs together so we can hope for a 2nd album! To me, Smith seemed the better of the two, so I probably should seek out his solo records.

5. **GUNS AND ROSES,** (from Los Angeles, LA Coliseum) 10/21/89. Guns and Roses? Whose list is this? Not expecting much + I don't own their records, but they blew me away live, believe it or not. Energy! Energy! Energy! (editor's note: This must be some sort of joke. Please tell me this is a joke, Jon? Please? Jon? I don't believe it. I have to print this?!?)

6. **BLAKE BABIES,** (from Boston, Knitting Factory, New York) 9/17/89 and 10/28/89. 1st chance to see this Boston band, who have a new LP out on Mammoth Records (2 extra tracks on the CD). Very powerful trio with pleasant, yet biting vocals from female singer/bassist. A tad reminiscent of early Throwing Muses but very unique in their own right. Right on with their choice of covers. Who else with a female singer would cover **THE STOOGES'** "Loose" (actually, it loses a lot if you ask me!--ed). 2nd time I saw them they covered a **LUCINDA WILLIAMS** song. Great taste!

7. **XTC,** (from Swindon, England, WMMR-FM, Philadelphia, acoustic - live in studio) 5/17/89. Well, I really didn't see them perform, but if I had....Actually, they played a few songs acoustically in the studio (great version of "Mayor of Simpleton") and later that day I saw them and spoke with them at Tower Records in-store. This may be the closest I get to seeing XTC live, and it was a pleasant surprise (actually we're told they're finally considering touring again in 1990. After 8 years of no live shows, they must have had a great time doing acoustic radio gigs across the U.S.-ed)

8. **WILL AND THE BUSHMEN,** (from Nashville, Cat Club, New York) 7/17/89. Part of New Music Seminar. As usual, I hated the Cat Club, but for a good show I'll go there. The Bushmen were real good. They rock more live than their record, which was slickly produced by **RICHARD GOTTEHRER.** They've got good songs and a good sense of humor. Catch them when they play your town.

9. **LUCINDA WILLIAMS,** (from Los Angeles, Max's on Broadway, Baltimore, MD.) 3/23/89. This was the first time seeing Lucinda, whose record was my favorite of 1988. The show was superb, and included 3 encores. The last of which she came on with just guitarist Gurf and did a nice version of "All I Want" an older recorded song of hers.

10. **OTIS BALL AND THE CHAINS,** (from Dekalb, Illinois Live Tonight, Hoboken) 7/19/89. Talk about surprises! This one threw me for a loop. Never even heard of Otis Ball who's apparently a legend in DeKalb. Dragged to this show by a friend and boy was I glad. Otis writes great songs, Otis is out of his mind, and Otis is also one heck of a live performer. Kind of schizophrenic. I think I caught him on a good night. Buy his record on Bar None - should be out when you read this.

JON WELLS TOP TEN RECORDS 1989

1. **KIRSTY MacCOLL**-KITE (Virgin UK)
2. **THE LAST**-AWAKENING (SST)
3. **MATTHEW SWEET**-EARTH (A & M)
4. **GO BETWEENS**-16 LOVERS LANE (Beggars Banquet) →
5. **POSIES**-FAILURE (Pop Llama)
6. **LUCINDA WILLIAMS** (Rough Trade)
7. **MIRACLE LEGION**-ME AND MR. RAY (Rough Trade)
8. **WINDBREAKERS**-AT HOME WITH BOBBY AND TIM (dB)
9. **BLAKE BABIES**-EARWIG (Mammoth)
10. **DARDEN SMITH & BOO HEWERDINE**-EVIDENCE (Chrysalis)

These are not in any particular order so you can arrange them any way you like!!

"What do I get?"... Pete Shelley ponders reunion readies

N.M.E. 10/21/89

'Cocks Buzz again

THE BUZZCOCKS are reforming for a 20 date tour of America next month.

The seminal Manchester band who released the first DIY punk EP 'Spiral Scratch' and toured as support on The Clash's White Riot shows are being re-grouped by Raf Edmonds – manager of ex-Buzzcocks singer/guitarist Pete Shelley.

Edmonds told *NME* this week that the band have been tempted back into action following a string of offers to play the States. And there is a possibility that there'll be UK shows to follow.

The band will feature the same members who made Top 30 hits like 'Promises' and 'Ever Fallen In Love' – Shelley on vocals and guitar, Steve Diggle (guitar), Steve Garvey (bass) and John Maher (drums).

The US tour start on November 7 in Rhode Island and takes the group through to November 30.

Said Edmonds: "From May there have been several approaches to myself and Pete saying that there's demand in America to see them. FBI, one of the biggest agencies out there made a good offer and I've just this week got the agreement from all the band to do it.

"Pete made it clear from the start that he wouldn't be involved in any project which didn't feature all the original members of the band, as of when Howard Devoto left. But everyone's now agreed.

"Without wishing to be mercenary, none of them made much money out of The Buzzcocks and the reality of the situation is that the right figure was put up, so everthing's on.

Beyond the American shows I've already had offers of dates over here but I can't give any decision until we've seen how the American shows go."

Steve Garvey already lives out in New York where he's involved in a construction company. Maher is currently best known for drag-racing customised Beetles.

However the news of the group reforming does follow a bizarre calendar of events this year surrounding Diggle – and Buzzcocks record releases.

● Back in the Spring Diggle changed the name of his band from **FLAG OF CONVENIENCE** to **BUZZCOCKS FOC**. The group encountered critical flack over the monicker but released one single and toured the country.

● A month ago however Diggle was reportedly kicked out of the group following a string of musical differences. The remaining members have now changed their name to THE HIGH – their manager Howard Jones telling *NME* this week: "The rest of the band didn't agree with the direction Steve wanted to take them in. They felt he was looking backwards too much."

● Diggle fulfilled three remaining dates as Buzzcocks FOC with a make-shift line-up including Craig Gannon – previously second guitarist with The Smiths.

● Meanwhile, **PETE SHELLEY** following the release of a re-recorded version of his best known solo single 'Homosapien' appeared at John Peel's birthday party at London's Subterrania and softened up to the idea of reforming The Buzzcocks – a move he'd previously turned down on several occasions.

● Interest in The Buzzcocks back catalogue has overflowed onto vinyl. In August Absolutely Free Records released a live LP of the band recorded in 1977 at The Roxy.

● Now EMI have issued a four track EP of the band's singles 'Ever Fallen In Love', 'Promises', 'Everybody's Happy Nowadays' and 'Harmony In My Head'. It's followed by a five-LP boxed set titled 'Product' which includes a live set recorded for Capitol Radio at London's Lyceum, plus their three studio albums and the singles compilation 'Singles Going Steady'.

While The Buzzcocks were enjoying Top 30 success over here at the end of the '70s their popularity grew in America – and has continued to thrive.

Last year, to cater for Stateside demand, ROIR Cassettes issued a live tape called 'Lest We Forget' featuring tracks recorded by the band in the States shortly before they split in February '81.

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Impresario: Malcolm McLaren and the British New Wave

Exhibition-New Museum of Contemporary Art, September 15

By: MARIA PARI

The scene outside the New Museum on Thursday night (Sep. 15) was more reminiscent of the crowd outside Palladium than it was of a museum. Appropriately so, as it was none other than a show on Malcolm McLaren's influence in the early-mid 70's music scene. Walking inside, one is jolted by the plexiglass enclosed remnants of one's adolescence; NY Dolls, Adam Ant, Bowwowwow, and Sex Pistols album covers, posters, and other such "memorabilia." Wandering next into a dimly lit club-like room, fashion mannequins stupidly gaze at the viewer in what is supposed to be a display of punk outerwear and gear, as represented from McLaren's shop on King's Road, interestingly enough which had six different names-the most well known being SEX. (It was originally a Teddy boy outlet called "Let's Rock") The t-shirts hanging on bars were quite banal and seemed a bit lame as representative of what punks would wear. There was nothing shocking or punk about them unless the juvenile humor expressed in a black tee with painted tits is someone's idea of punkness. This is a little disturbing for those who know nothing of the punk scene are walking away with this image. While watching a video loop of the Sex Pistols,(the same 2 over & over) one woman pointed at the monitor, and to my horror, asked her companion, "Is that the Sex Pistols?" That explains the crowd. The rest of the exhibit is not worth expressing, but I will mention my intense urges to destroy it all.

After tapping Mr. McLaren lightly on the shoulder, he unhesitatingly gave us his time. His talk was straightforward, gazing into our faces and not in typical club-like fashion to the multitudes in the beyond. He enlightened us on a few things regarding the show and himself. The show, which was pretty sickening, was not of his design. In fact, he had very little say about the whole thing. He was merely contacted to "help out" the museum's decisionmakers. He admitted bluntly he would not have done the show the way it was presented. "If I hadn't helped them out, I figured there wouldn't have been a show." Malcolm felt he would rather have this glimpse of punk for spectators than nothing at all. Expressing what we felt about the unfair representation of punk (a bunch of t-shirts and album covers), Malcolm said, "You would never have had this type of show in London, it's sufficient here in this downtown New York area but in London it insufficient. It's too immediate there, they know all about it." When asked about his contribution to the punk scene and what he thinks about it now, in an unpretentious manner he explained that, "People have a critique now of what's cool...Street now has a meaning." Punk's evolution has allowed, now, for this aesthetic to be created. Malcolm McLaren sincerely hopes the Museum's show will be inspiring to the public. To have them "catch a few bits" of punk's beginnings and to further discover more about what they viewed. Who knows, maybe Max's Kansas City will re-open?

SIDELINES OF THE STARS: This is "Mr. Beetle," the Volkswagon Beetle used by Buzzcocks' drummer JOHN MAHER to drag race when he's not repairing VW's at his garage. Photo taken after Maher crashed going 100 MPH! (photo: John Maher)

SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's! SEE YOU ALL IN THE 90's!

FINAL WORD: TIM SOMMER has been moved from hosting MTV's Post-Modern to appearing on "News at Night." Apparently, MTV felt it couldn't afford a host for post-modern (expensive studio time), and now no one hosts the program. This is intollerable. Even the worst host like Martha Quinn is better than no host, some human voice! And Sommer is particularly missed. To voice displeasure with this change, write: MTV Post Modern, 1775 Broadway, NY, NY 10019.*****Goodbye to the 80's, a faceless decade, but don't worry, the 90's will be worse.*****Please, please write and respond to the contents of this mag. We appreciate contact more than you'll ever know. Two way streets are the only ones worth travelling.

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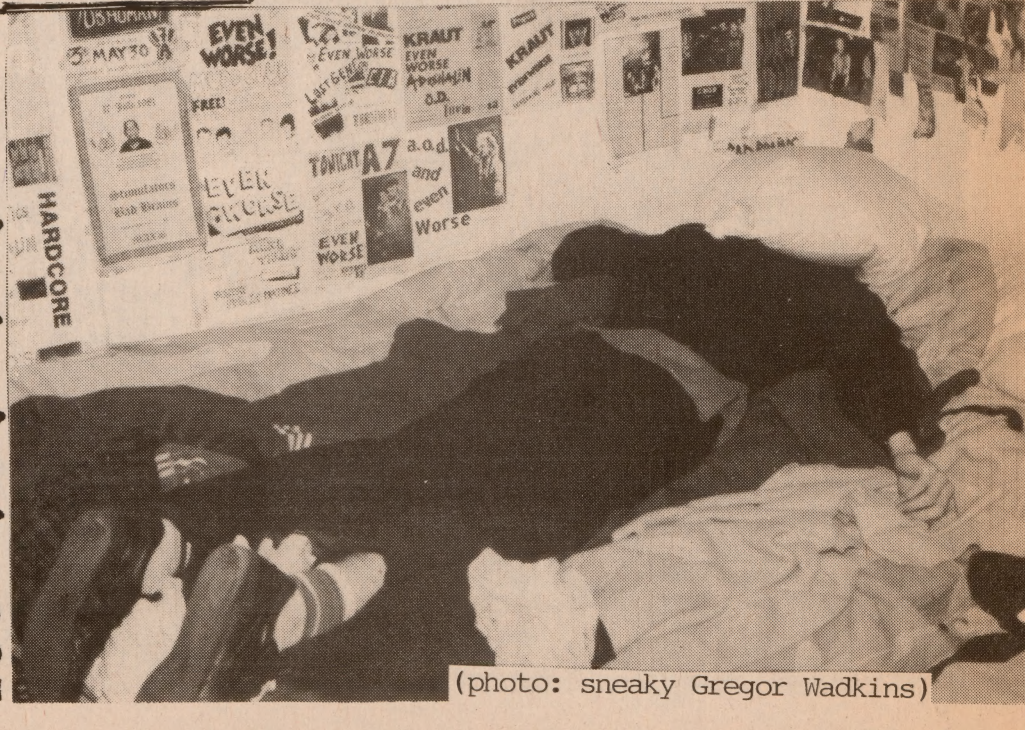
FLEENER

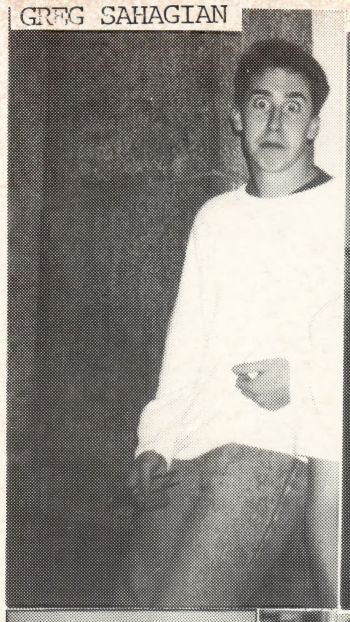
Happy holidays to you and yours. May the ubiquitous Mr. Claus bring you the Buzzcocks' Product 5 LP (3 CD) collection (then you know you've been real nice this year). Brrrr it's cold!

I'M DONE! ARE YOU KIDDING!
THERE'S NO MORE! HAHAHAHAHA..
(sound of editor collapsing.
You can reach him at
Bellvue, try visiting hours,
but don't expect any degree
of coherency. Poor fool.)
106 ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓



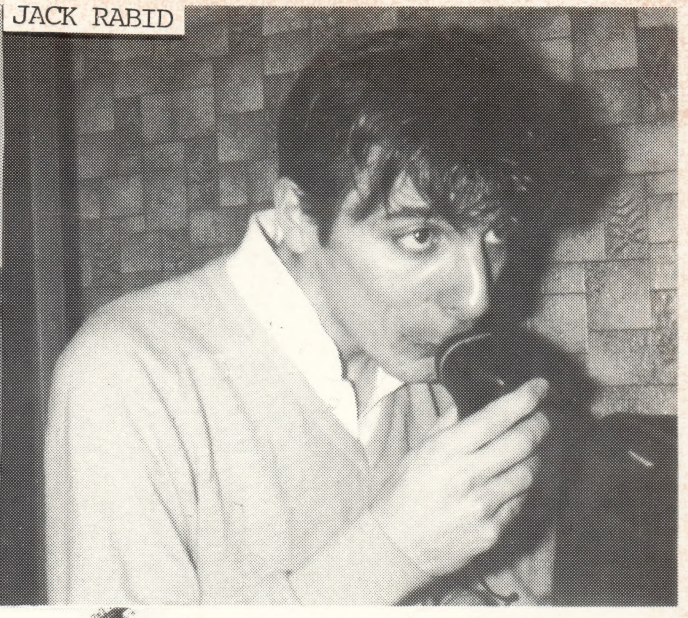
(photo: sneaky Gregor Wadkins)

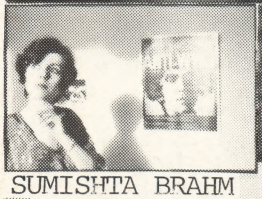
GREG SAHAGIAN



CAROLINE PARI

JACK RABID

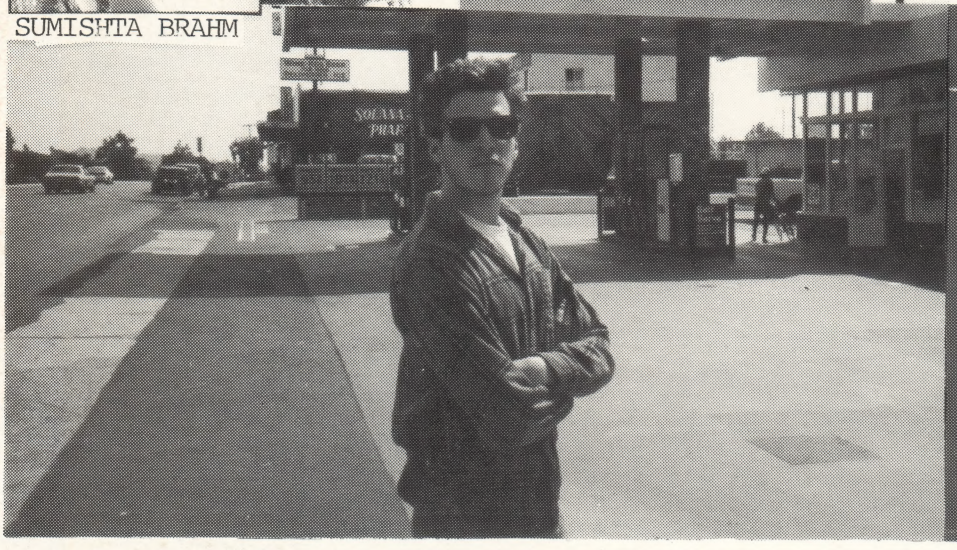




RICHARD KATZ

Photos: JACK by CAROLINE PARI, GREG by JACK RABID, JON by UNKNOWN, RICH by LARA KHACHOONI, CAROLINE by SANDY FRIEDLAND, SUMISHTA self portrait.

SUMISHTA BRAHM



JON WELLS (with Brix Smith!)

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

"There is a class of hardy men, old fashioned enough to have remained rugged individuals, openly contemptuous of the trend, passionately devoted to their work, impossible to bribe or seduce, working long hours, often without reward or fame, who are motivated by a common impulse - the joy of doing as they please. At some point along the way they separated from the others. The men I speak of can be detected at a glance: their countenance registers something far more vital, far more effective, than the lust for power. They do not seek to dominate, but to realize themselves. They operate from a center which is at rest. They evolve, they grow, they give nourishment just by being what they are."
----**HENRY MILLER, from "The Air Conditioned Nightmare (1939)** (My thanks to Christine Young for reminding me of this passage, after seeing the other passages of this book I quoted in issue 23. If you do not own this work, I can't recommend it more highly than any other I've ever read about America and human nature, with the only possible exception of a similar book written 23 years later in the twilight of **JOHN STEINBECK**'s career Travels With Charley. Spend your last penny on these two.

HENRY MILLER

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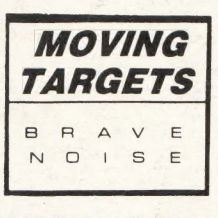

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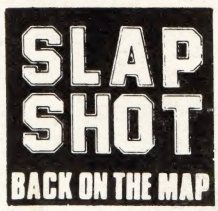

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